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Craft Australia
Winter 1985/2

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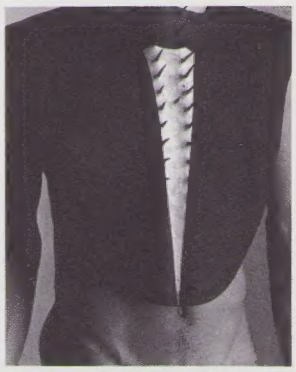

Pat Lovell The Bulletin

Dismantle the Design Arts Board!

Have you heard of the Design Arts Board? It is the latest creation of the Australia Council — propped up with about one-half million scarce arts-dollars. The Design Arts Board is to encourage 'excellence' in design. Its clients are architects, engineers, fashion and textile designers, graphic designers, industrial designers, landscape architects and planners.

These profitable commercial areas of design do not need encouragement and aid. For example, does the Royal Australian Institute of Architects need a Design Arts Board? They have a posh national office in Canberra with a staff of ten, state offices and galleries, two bookstores, a national colour magazine and *over 8000* dues-paying members.

What about the fashion and textile industry? There are national and international support bodies, infinite numbers of fashion magazines and garment parades. Does this lucrative and wildly successful art form need the Design Arts Board?

The Design Arts Council's mandate is a shameless duplication of the design community's own promotions. Take another example — the broad field of 'design'. There is a well-established Design Institute of Australia and two handsome colour magazines devoted to Australian design. Commercial design by its very nature is self-supporting.

How could a handful of arts administrators hope to promote design as well as the Industrial Design Council? The Council has a posh gallery in The Rocks, Sydney, a corporate membership that would make a project officer swoon and generous Commonwealth funding. They also administer a successful annual design award programme and enjoy Prince Philip as a Patron.

One could fashion a similar case of duplication for Interior Design, Landscape Architecture and Planning.

Minister Dawkins, Minister Cohen, Donald Horne and many others have urged greater corporate involvement in the arts matters. The corporate sector invests millions in design promotion annually through advertising. Now the Design Arts Board proposes to come to their aid with its meagre staff.

The Design Arts Board should be disbanded immediately. The Board's monies should be redistributed or given to the hapless Visual Arts Board and the Crafts Board, the most shamelessly underfunded boards in the history of the Australia Council.

Michael Bogle

LETTERS

Please keep your letters short so we can publish as many as possible. Some letters may be edited for length.

To the Editor

Would it be possible to obtain through you the address of Margo Snape whose marbled paper is featured in your summer issue? This is something I've always vaguely intended to return to. I had a brief exposure to this fascinating medium long ago when I was studying art education in New Zealand. Information on this old art form is difficult to obtain, at least I have found it so, not to mention exponents of it so I was overjoyed to see that someone here in Australia is producing such beautiful work. I'd be grateful if I could somehow contact Margo or failing that some assistance in ferretting out some books on the subject.

Diane Feather
Perth, WA

Margo Snape welcomes contact through the *Calligraphy and Book Arts Studio*, 31 Victoria Street, McMahons Point, NSW 2060. (02) 923–1288.

To the Editor:

Read at least twice your article in ***Craft Australia*** and have renamed it for personal, reasons SEWING confusion in the useful arts.

As an embroiderer/knitter I identify with much of what you say; that between the creative impulse and its historical analysis lie many more desirable alternative paths.

The only significant school history lesson for me was about the Frenchwomen knitting at the guillotine. The judgement was made that these women were monsters particularly because they were knitting, no mention was made of men watching and say, smoking. The lesson I learned was that not only does a male prejudice exist against women's handcrafts but that a post-Victorian morality sees them as a self-indulgent time-filling/wasting activity of little merit. What I really would like to have known is WHY they were knitting, or even WHAT? Since that day I have had enough experience of women and craft to know that women produce (knit, quilt, whatever) through revolution, war, depression and personal and family crisis. This independent production (not primarily for profit) seems threatening to the male power structure, not only because it is out of its control but because it infers a system of values exists beyond that accepted by the 'majority' as necessary or desirable.

Thus there exists an underground of women's craft activity, shakily funded or produced by teams of voluntary labour, poorly advertised due to lack of funds but well attended nevertheless. *The D'Oyley Show,* the Embroiderer's, Weavers and Quilters Guilds, the *Women and Arts Festival* in recent history have been primarily self generating without support from the Craft hierarchy. The more useful the art the less status it has in the crafts. Decorative used to be the ultimate put down till the non-functional potters made it acceptable.

Nola Taylor
Bexley, NSW

To the Editor:

I read with interest your recent debate on 'art v. craft', since it is one I have often had to engage in. I particularly noticed your final remarks along the lines of 'only art historians are confused about art v. craft, therefore let art history be taught to artists by artists, and the confusion and problems will end'. (I paraphrase rather loosely from memory, so hope I have not misrepresented you.) It is with some trepidation, therefore, that I have to admit that I am an art historian and one who teaches art history not only to art students but also to craft and design students. I have been doing my best for some years to try to minimise the destructive effects some of the conventional attitudes can have on students. As you know, there are a very limited number of craft and design historians in Australia, particularly those involved in teaching, as opposed to museum staff. I for one would very much like to see these areas of art history considerably upgraded. I am aware that many art and craft students attend art history courses at their Colleges in which craft is barely mentioned. I attempt to redress this as far as possible at Victoria College, Prahran, where I am lecturer in art and design history. The shortage of craft historians has also meant that there is a lack of academic research into and publication on the history of craft in this country, which also handicaps teaching.

Caroline Miley
Kew, Victoria

To the Editor:

After having read the 1984 Autumn Edition of Craft Australia I would very much desire to have my own copy. I teach Textiles and Design and one of the articles is invaluable to my senior students. I have tried many Newsagents, Bookshops, etc. but have been unable to secure a copy. Could you please give me information of how I may secure a copy?

Elizabeth Bicket
Miranda, NSW

To order back issues, enclose a cheque for the magazine plus postage which is $1.10 for NSW and $1.35 elsewhere. Prices per issue are $2.50 (1972–79), $4.50 (1980–82) and $5.95 for 1982 to the present.

To the Editor:

You spoke too soon Janet De Boer (letter to the Editor Summer 1984/4) for I do have a complaint and it has 'controversial content', or at least implied controversy.

I refer to the article written by me and published in Summer issue 1984/4, the subject of which was Kathryn Tilley's embroidery. Inadvertently I omitted to designate a title, so the Editor provided one, 'Painting with the Needle'. Unfortunately this has unhappy connotations for the serious embroiderer.

Painting is described in the Oxford Dictionary as the application of 'a substance consisting of a solid colouring matter dissolved in a liquid vehicle, as water or oil'. The embroiderer's particular characteristic mark making is with stitches, although Kathryn Tilley does employ dyes in a *painterly style* to create patches of coloured light and shade (refer **A Dictionary of Art and Artists** by Peter and Linda Murray).

Embroiderers have experienced, over the past 20 years, a renaissance in the art world and have established a legitimate form of expression. Surely we do not need to rely on the painter to give us artistic credibility.

However, I should like to thank the Editor for featuring Kath's embroideries and trust that when she re-applies for a Craft Council Grant for her post-graduate studies in London, she is not one of those 'discriminated against' craftswomen he speaks of in his last editorial.

D. Anne Richards
Lecturer in Textile Arts
Victoria College,
Burwood Campus

MET . A . PHOR. N. A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action that it does not literally note in order to imply a resemblance . . .

The Editor

To the Editor:

Re: Sales tax for craftworkers

I am writing to find out information on your efforts to change these requirements and ask if I can add my voice to the cause? I would be happy to write to relevant people complaining, just tell me who.

I have been working full-time at my pottery and living from it (just) and now look like selling well over $12,000 only to find I shall have to increase my prices to pay sales tax and that makes it difficult to compete with cheap imports and hobby craft people. The amount the taxation allow is such a small figure one can hardly run a business and live on the amount and I feel I am costing less by not being on the dole and I am happy to pay sales tax on my purchases of equipment and materials.

I shall wait eagerly for your reply.

Sandra Hand
Braidwood, NSW

The C.C.A. conducted a survey on Sales Tax and the Crafts in 1983 from which a report was compiled and lobby strategy clarified.

The current C.C.A. submission before the Commonwealth Government asks for:

- Increase in Small Manufacturing Exemption limit from $12,000 to $25,000.
- Reduction in Sales Tax Rates on Handmade Craft Objects by 10% across the board.
- Elimination of Sales Tax on Aids to Manufacture.
- Re-defining of the guidelines applying to the Works of Art Exemption.

There has been no official response to date from the Government but there have been recent meetings with the Tax Department to discuss the submission.

There is also recently established a Tax Working Party including Tax Department and Ministry for Arts and Environment personnel. Their brief is to make recommendation on the Works of Art questions.

The C.C.A. is preparing (1985) a petition on Sales Tax for presentation to the Government. Copies will be available through the Crafts Councils.

Jane Burns, Executive Director, Crafts Council of Australia

To the Editor:

I have the Spring 1984 edition and found some of the articles fascinating.

Please permit me however to make one critical observation. I found the standard of graphic design and typography of the magazine not up to that of its content. I really believe it lets down much of the hard work which obviously goes into the publication.

May I refer you to **Architecture in Australia** which has retained the services of one of our members Michael Bryce, a professional graphic designer to give that magazine a distinct graphic identity. Of course there are many other such designers around and if you wish to discuss the matter further I would be most happy to provide you with a short list.

Desmond Freeman
Design Institute of Australia

To the Editor:

Congratulations on continuing to produce such a fine magazine. Each issue seems to improve in quality. Well done, it is worth every long hour I'm sure you all put into it.

Brenton Saxby
Cootamundra, NSW

To the Editor:

Janet De Boer in the Summer 1984 issue mentioned that you were 'complaining about the lack of complaints' sent to ***Craft Australia***. Never one to hide from controversy, I present below a few humble ramblings.

Both the Spring and Summer 1984 issues devoted double page spreads to The Arts vs Crafts Debate (the capital letters are applied with reluctance). Considering your apt comment that this issue 'should not drain one millisecond of an artist's time', I find the devotion of valuable space to such philosophical masturbation somewhat puzzling. However this allocation is only too symptomatic of the craft establishment. Metaphysical obfuscation is too often confused with directed action. The vital issue of economic viability is viewed by those in our craft quangos in much the same way as the nineteenth century aristocracy regarded trade.

Almost every person who makes a craft object is not an amateur. If you make a coffee mug and give it away or just use it yourself, you have ceased to be truly amateur as you have thereby deprived a professional craftsperson of a sale or have effectively derived income by avoiding expenditure. Economic viability is not therefore an isolated issue relevant only to those who live by what they make and then sell. It is a concern that all craftspeople influence and therefore should not ignore.

Obviously craft should be economically viable. This self-evident truth is not, I am sorry to say, obvious to me except in the narrowest sense. Equally, is it obvious that opera or BHP should be economically viable? Or that human life itself should be viable? What is obvious is that the importance of the economic viability of craft is not obvious to the craft establishment. I illustrate with some examples.

1. Consider ***Craft Australia***, one of the most important vehicles for craft promotion. The arrival of Ken Lockwood breathed new life into a magazine which was expected to die with the discontinuation of its Crafts Board subsidy (there is a valuable lesson to be learnt from this). Its reappearance on the newsstands is particularly welcome as for too long it had preached only to the converted. However it is now one of many magazines with craft content. This proliferation of exposure is especially valuable in that those with real discretionary incomes such as real estate agents, car salesmen, and multiple income families in the less fashionable suburbs, might thereby become craft purchasers. However ***Craft Australia*** has two deficiencies, by no means peculiar to itself: firstly, being printed abroad there is an immense delay between a craft event and its being reported (the *In Touch* loose sheet which went a little way to overcoming this has, alas, never been resurrected); and secondly, the price of the items pictured is never given. Anyway, why are pieces pictured not shown priced as a matter of course? Are we ashamed that we find it necessary to sell our work? Does it lower the tone of the magazine?

One final point about ***Craft Australia***, it used to pay $25 and a free copy of the magazine for a book review. Now it pays nothing, the Australian Society of Authors (its members are, like craftspeople, only too familiar with penury and exploitation) would not be impressed!

2. The Craft Resources Centre is an excellent concept, but an under-used and scarcely promoted facility. Because of limited funds it is forced to charge users. This is perhaps not too unreasonable, but the income gained could not possibly compensate for the ill-feeling generated. Far better that appropriate facilities are free. However a collection of slides in a filing cabinet scarcely constitutes a resource centre. It should have proper facilities, be better publicised, and be more accessibly represented (note the connotation of this word). If we had to pay an annual fee we would take much more interest in it. At present few craftspeople bother to update their entries because they are not aware that the facility is much used other than by those looking for ideas to copy.

3. Naturally the Crafts Board does not escape criticism. Its grant system is sometimes abused and the criteria for selection of successful applicants is shrouded in mystery. In short, no matter how fairly the grants programme is administered, it will always be divisive and looked upon with suspicion.

4. The Crafts Board budget of about $1.5 million pales into insignificance when compared with the funds spent on tertiary craft education. No penny pinching here, the Canberra School of Art can even use the coloured back cover of ***Craft Australia*** to advertise its courses. Indeed, the craft establishment, many of whom are employed in craft education, have a vested interest in underpinning and expanding craft education. Hence the necessity to introduce more craft education so that the new craft graduates can find employment. Furthermore, many of those employed in craft education freely use institutional facilities and even materials for their private work, thus cutting the feet from under the free-enterprise craftspeople.

The above four examples serve to illustrate the misguided and not always altruist policies of our craft establishment. There is no lack of effort or enthusiasm, it is their misdirection which is the problem. Craft education is highly laudable, but there is not a shortage of craftspeople. The emphasis must be switched to promotion of craft sales to a wider public. Similarly, as the Crafts Board is unlikely to be abolished, it should be revitalised with people with marketing expertise and its expenditure redirected.

So to summarize we have the makers, sellers, educators, funders and administrators all pulling in different directions. They could pull together. I suspect that this letter will not make one iota of difference, however, as usual, I have enjoyed writing it.

M. J. Darlow
Chippendale, NSW

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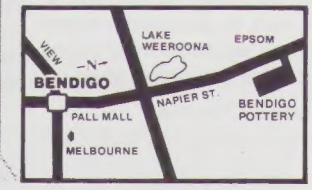

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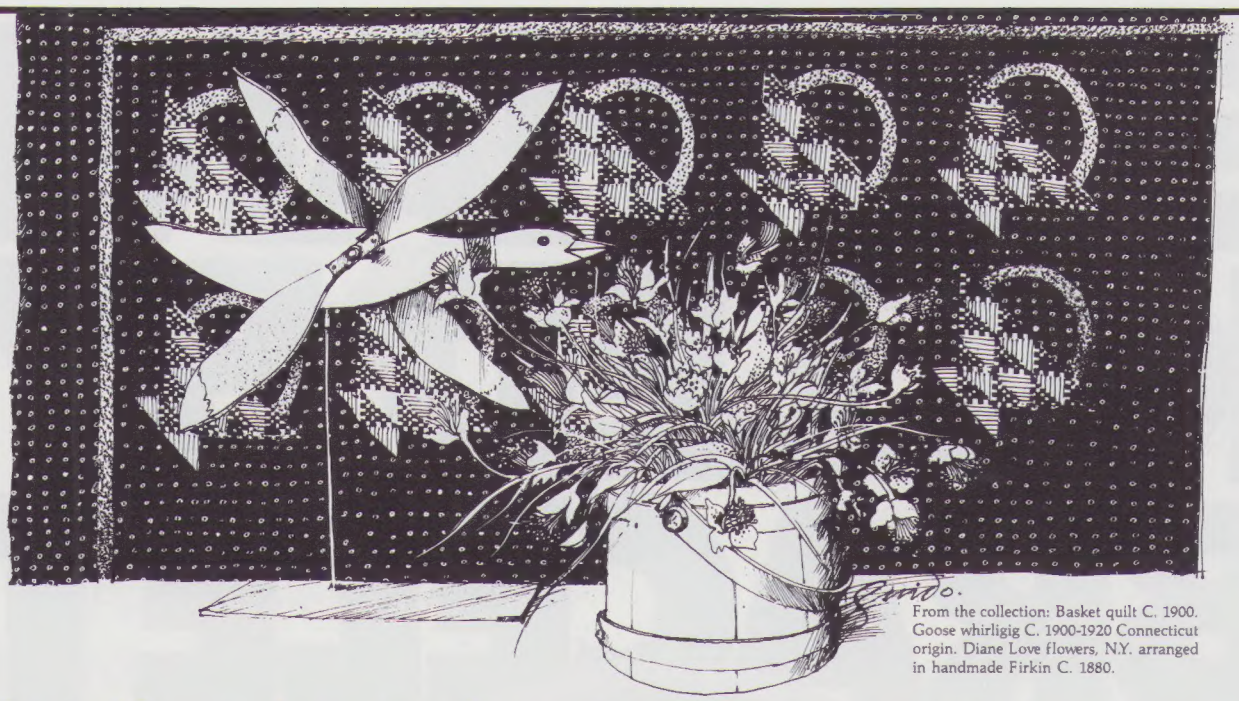

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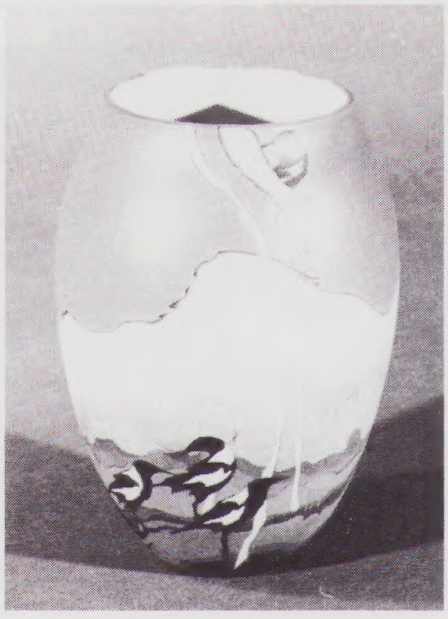

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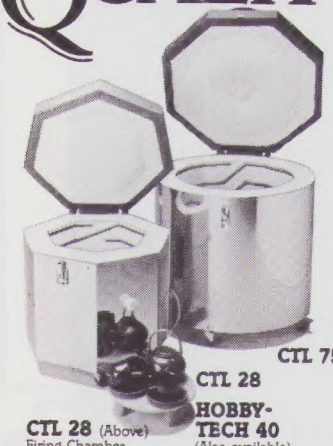

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CTL 28

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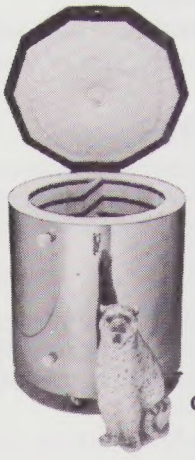
CTL 224
(Also available)
Firing Chamber Dimensions—
Capacity: 224L (8cu.ft.)
Diam.: 61cm x 94cm (24" x 37")
Height: 45cm (18")
Overall Dimensions—
Width: 89cm (35")
Depth: 114cm (45")
Height: 81cm (32")

CTL 450
(Also available)
Firing Chamber Dimensions—
Capacity: 450L (16cu.ft.)
Diam.: 72cm x 107cm (28" x 42")
Height: 69cm (27")
Overall Dimensions—
Width: 99cm (39")
Depth: 127cm (50")
Height: 104cm (41")



CTL 182

CTL 182	**CTL 120** (Also available)
Firing Chamber Dimensions—	
Capacity: 182L (6.5cu.ft.)	120L (4.3cu.ft.)
Diam.: 58cm (23")	58cm (23")
Height: 69cm (27")	46cm (18")
Overall Dimensions—	
Width: 76cm (30")	76cm (30")
Depth: 91cm (36")	91cm (36")
Height: 91cm (36")	68cm (27")

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Looms, Spinning Wheels - Accessories

Photo Norman Wodetzki

Tote-A-Loom

Tote-A-Loom is designed to be worked with the weaver sitting in a chair and the main frame resting on the lap, giving a comfortable weaving angle. The Loom can be worked very much the same way, with the weaver in bed. This manner offers excellent therapeutic value.

Warping. A key benefit of the loom is a simple rod system, which produces a continuous warp. Warping up time, about 20 mins.

Tapestry Size. The max. is 450mm × 1300mm in length. Larger tapestries or rugs may be woven in sections. There are various settings up to this maximum.

Portable. Tote-A-Loom is portable and can be easily moved with work in progress. Fold away legs gives easy storage.

Versatile. Tote-A-Loom is suitable for either coarse or fine weaving. Ideal for wall hangings, table runners, purses, bags, cushions, rugs.

Adjustable. It incorporates a simple adjustment to make warping easy for either right or left-handed people. Has separate tension adjustment. Recommended retail $125.00

Wee Peggy

A kitset wheel of the highest quality evolved from the upright Shetland Wheel.

Features. Thick, heavy and solid wheel built in lazy kate: 4 bobbins: 10mm spindle orifice: screw adjustment on both maidens for driving band tension: threading hook: nylon spindle and wheel bearings: double snare or scotch tension.

Assembly. Easy: clear instructions included, made from N.Z. timbers, Southland beech and kahikatea, dressed and turned to a high grade finish.

Wee Peggy is most portable: available stained and polished or unstained. The polish is a semi-gloss medium dark shade.

Dimensions. Height 37" width 18" depth 14" weight 14 lbs.

All working parts unconditionally guaranteed. A matching chair is available, also a Jumbo spinning attachment, and a larger 2 speed whorl for the thicker and softer yarns.

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Assembly. Easy: 4 nuts and 3 wood screws.

Dimensions. Height 35" length 35" width 12" weight 25 lbs, wheel to whorl ratios 17-12-8½-7½. 4 to 1.

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Chair $ 72.25

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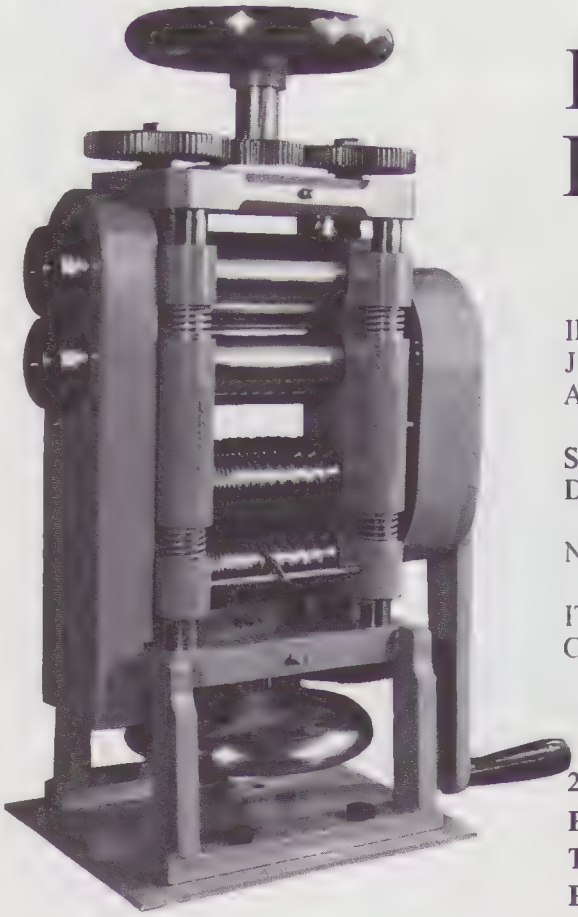

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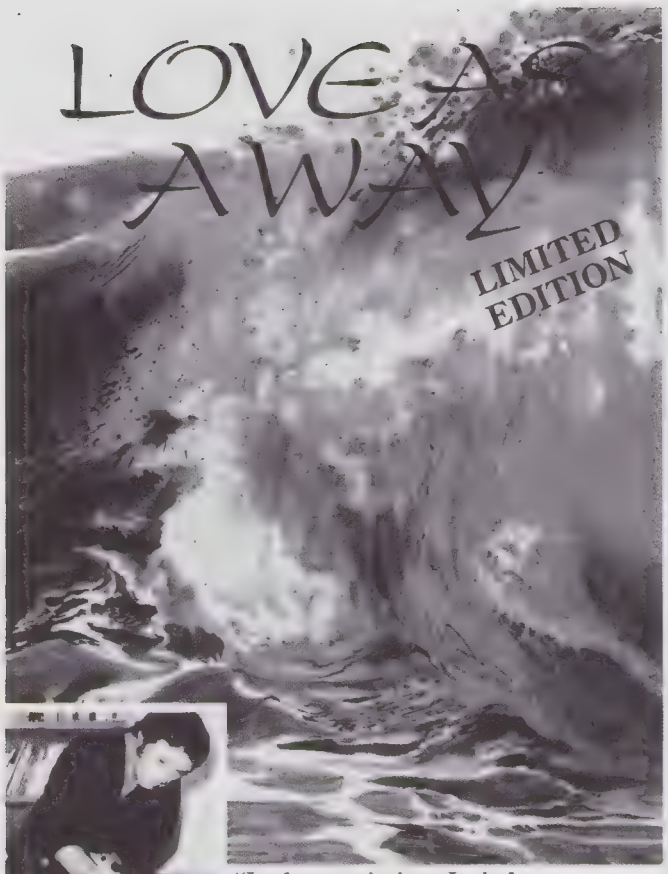
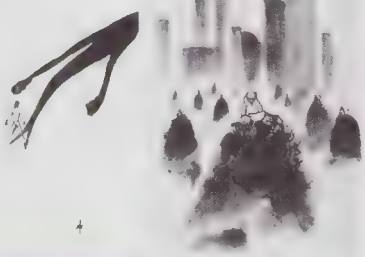
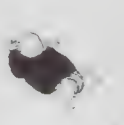


"In these paintings I tried to express the intense feeling of love, and what is not love . . ."
André Sollier





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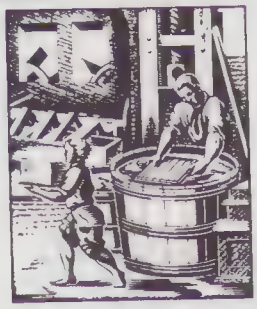

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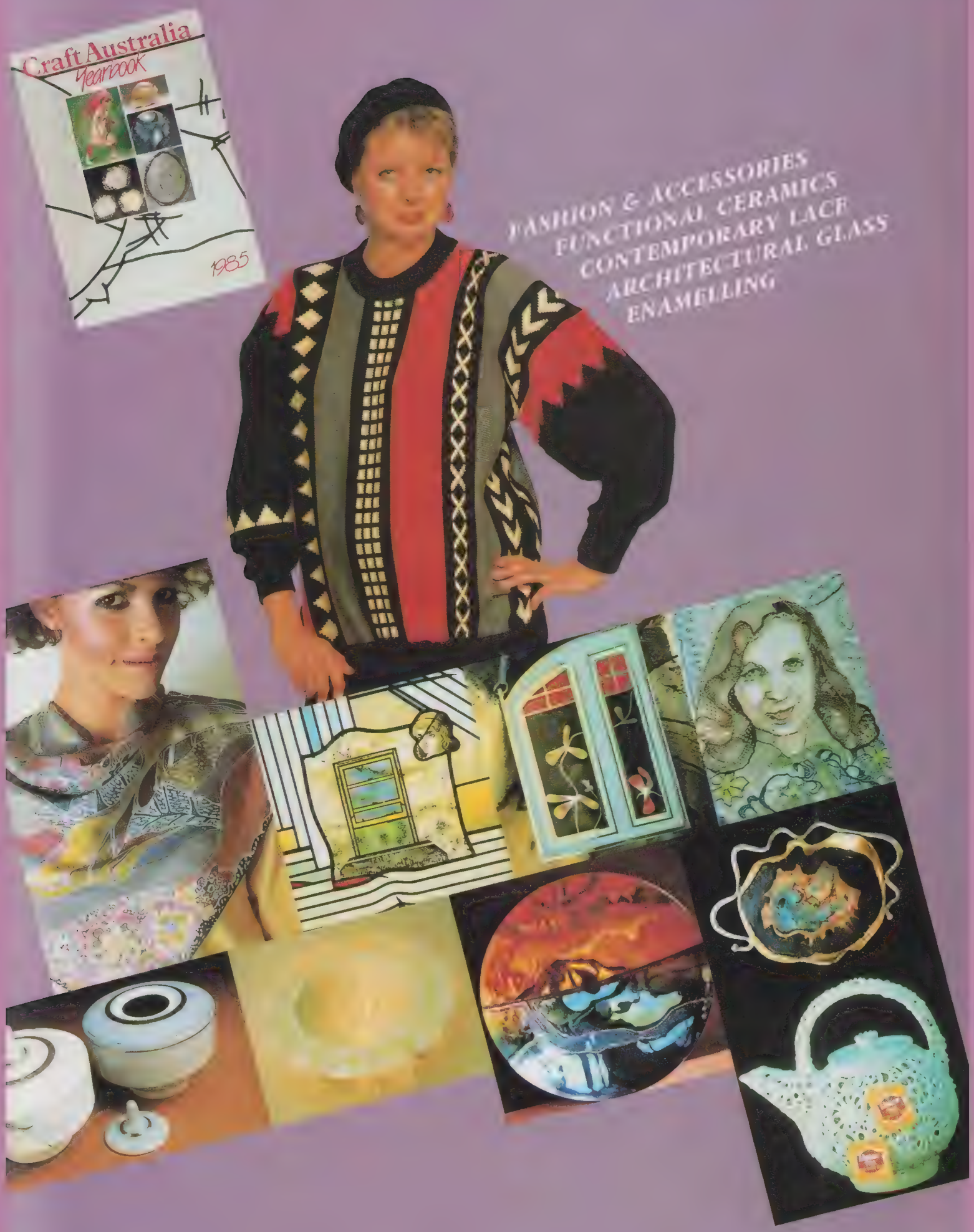
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Ten years ago, my husband James and I elected to live in retreat in the country in order to pursue our personal, philosophical ideals. One of our aims was to create a total environment, sustaining and beautiful, in which to live.

My way of life is essentially reclusive and within its confines the farm has become a world unto itself. I find my attention is focused with heightened intensity on the myriad components of my immediate surroundings.

For years I watched, despairing, as the worst drought in history silenced the land and its dependents. It was a deeply moving personal experience that has significantly influenced so many of my subsequent thoughts and deeds.

Resurrection. 22 x 70cms. Spun and unspun sisal, braided sisal, quills with dyed silk threads. 1984.

Eventually, the inevitable miracle of renewal began to stir the seasonal rhythms and the life force flowed again, into and from the earth.

The most delicate and fragile plants and creatures seemed to possess a wondrous inner power that nurtured them in a state of suspended dormancy, whilst more superficially robust organisms succumbed to the stress of deprivation.

Integration. 22 x 44cms. Spun sisal, handspun silk, found objects (nests, eggshells, cocoon, quills) with dyed silk threads. 1984.

Ascent. 24 x 34cms. Spun sisal, handspun silk, quills. 1984.

The nest, the egg, the quill from discarded feathers seemed to embody the essence of delicacy and strength. The bird, linked to the earth but not earthbound, except in death.

The *Cycle Series One* is really just a quiet, visual conversation with myself; a reminder and small tribute to the magic and mystery of the creative intelligence which pervades all things.

***Flight*. 29 x 70cms. Spun sisal, rayon, quills.**

Descent. 22 x 60cms. Spun sisal, handspun silk, dyed quills. 1984.

Disintegration. 30 x 60cms. Spun sisal, handspun silk, quills with dyed silk.

1. Cheryl Rimmer. *Thrown stoneware platter.* Oxides and stains. 42 cms dia. Photo Matthew Fogarty.

2. Cheryl Rimmer. *Stoneware Saggar-fixed slab.* 23 × 25 cms. Photo Matthew Fogarty.

3. Dorothea Hirschfelder. *Stoneware jar* with iron brushwork over magnesia glaze. 18 cms high. Photo Janet Kovesi.

Ten-moku

Though the term collective is thought to have too many socialist connotations by at least one member, a Perth pottery co-operative has shown social rather than economic benefits.

Started four years ago by Mike Calder and Marc Sauvage, *Ten-moku* is tucked away upstairs in a neo-colonial shopping development in Cottesloe, one of a string of affluent suburbs between the Swan River and the Indian Ocean.

In spite of its low architectural profile, *Ten-moku* is well patronised by people throughout the Perth metropolitan area attracted to Napoleon Street, a short village-like thoroughfare wedged between a busy highway and a suburban railway station.

There are fruit-and-vegetable shops, a health food store and ubiquitous boutiques selling *no-wave* derivative summer cottons, with the odd revival of 1960s curtain prints.

Surprisingly anonymous for its size, the corrugated-iron factory that gave birth to *Australia II* stands in the next street.

Ten original members of the co-operative agonised over a name for the group and finally plumped for word play on a Japanese saturated-iron glaze. *Ten-moku* were people with a mature and distinctive style who didn't want to set up just another craft shop. An earlier co-operative, The Kiln Shelf, was used as a model and ideas were borrowed from ventures in Melbourne and New Zealand.

The dream was to provide a monthly cash flow, reduce the cost of selling, buy materials in bulk and socialise with like-minded souls. They scored three out of four, with average selling costs hovering around the 33 per cent charged by galleries and other outlets. Those who sell a lot gain the most.

A day of reckoning is held every month to dish out the spoils and calculate costs such as rent, power and phone. Fortunately it's not a case of life or death for

4. Dorothea Hirschfelder. *Stoneware jar* with wax-resist decoration. 22 cms high. Photo Janet Kovesi.

5. Wendy Binks. *Painted dish*. 14 cms dia.

6. Wendy Binks. *Painted plate*. 30 cms dia.

7. Jo Reid. *Porcelain bowls* with gold lustre. 6 × 12 cms. Photo Matthew Fogarty.

8. Jo Reid. *Porcelain stemmed bowl* with gold lustre. 18 × 24 cms. Photo Matthew Fogarty.

9. Anne Gordon. *Spheres*. 12 cms and 9 cms.

anyone, and year-round exposure to the public means plenty of feedback, particularly on the practicality of functional pieces. Customers drop all sorts of comments in unguarded moments, unaware that the shop assistant might well have created the work in question.

The members of *Ten-moku* are free to follow their own styles as far as exhibitions are concerned. They work from home, suffering a degree of isolation common to creative individuals. A roster system for minding the store, secretarial duties and chairing the group brings them out of their cocoons to swap organisational and artistic ideas.

'Getting together is good for talking over problems and complaining about things,' says Janet Kovesi.

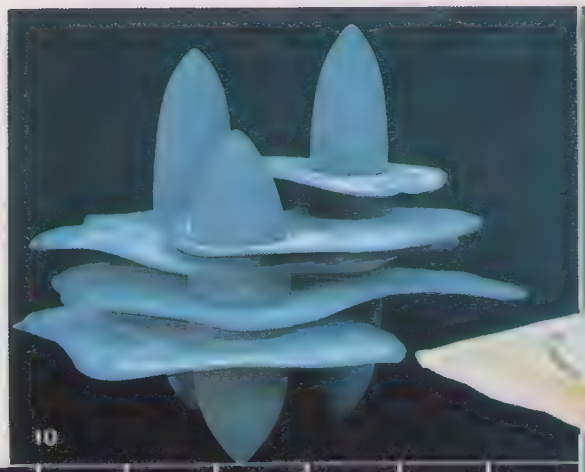
'It keeps us up to the mark without the agony of putting on an exhibition. After all, painters produce their pictures and pass them on to the framer, but we put our precious creations into a box and set fire to them.'

But the shop scene has brought conflict to Jill Smith, the *avant-garde* member of the co-op. She felt the need to work under a pseudonym when making retail pieces and brought 'Blanche Blancmange' into being.

'Although the name is used on labels I couldn't carry it right through and hide my identity completely, it might have been offensive to other people in the group. Yet I still see Blanche as a statement that my work for the shop is different.'

Jill thinks the line drawn between craftspeople and artists is not the result of the content of their work, but the materials they choose for creative expression. For this reason she likes to be known as a ceramic artist. When she was a student in fine art, pottery was looked upon as a second-class activity. Now she 'paints' on white stoneware using glaze pencils.

The artist doesn't particularly like her *alter ego*. Blanche suits the emphasis on earning capacity in the shop and is often tempted to repeat things that sell well. She is second-rate, a prostitute of sensibilities



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who doesn't aspire to worthwhile statements. However, some sympathy must be extended to her as her comfortable boundaries work against any noble aspirations.

'My own attitude has evolved from my fine art training. Each piece is a unique problem in which the time and mental effort involved becomes impractical in a commercial situation.

'I suppose I'm schizoid.'

Jo Reid lives in a small cottage in the industrial district of South Fremantle, about to be transformed by the building of Alan Bond's America's Cup crew quarters. At the rear of the dwelling stands an idiosyncratic two-storey studio housing Jo and her sculptor/jeweller husband Robin. For anyone into trivia, the access is from Gold Street which changes into Silver Street a few metres away.

With so much brown pottery around, she loves experimenting with colour on low-fired porcelain. A commercial red glaze has been dubbed 'husband's blood' by Robin and she regularly uses 22-carat gold applied as a liquid at the third firing.

Largely self taught, with a few classes at the Fremantle Arts Centre, Jo was introduced to pottery about eight years ago by painter Guy Grey-Smith. Harking back to the Japanese origins of *Ten-moku*, her philosophy has a distinct *Zen* flavour to it, the best approach is no approach.

'Living in the world one sees things, picks up fragments. This is the stuff of inspiration and the main idea is not to have any ideas.'

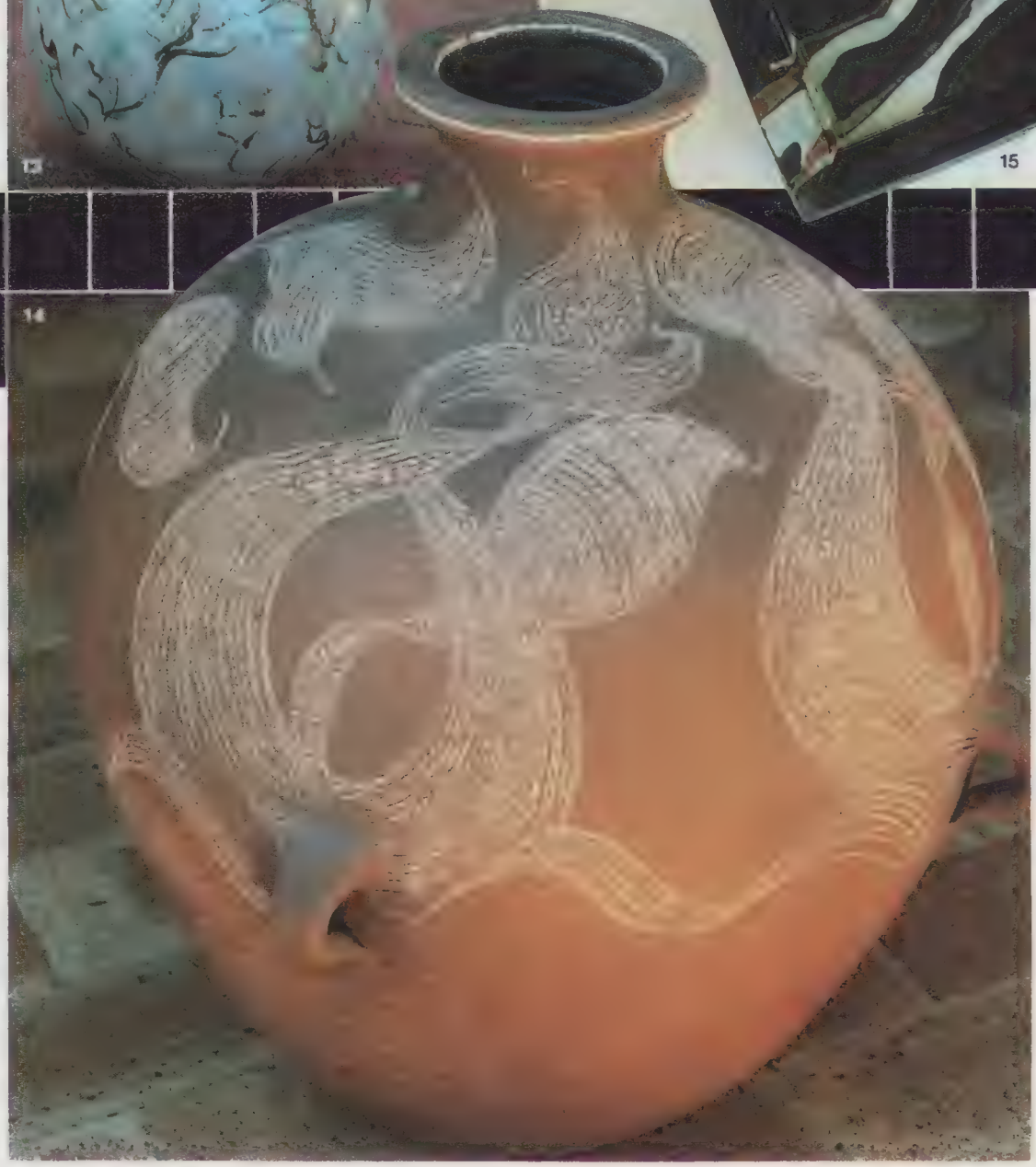
Function, practicality and enjoyment govern Mary St John's work. Having lived and worked in England she absorbed the influence of Bernard Leach who, she told ***Craft Australia***, has had an effect on just about every craft potter.

Mary works every day, a legacy from five years of producing domestic ware at the Beaufort Pottery in

10. Anne Gordon. *Exocet*. 1983.

11. Jill Smith. *Sage's Mask*. 45 cms high.

12. Jill Smith. *Potted Blanch*. 40 cms high.



13. Graeme Symons. *Vase* decorated with slips, brush work and overspray. 23 cms high. Photo Janet Kovesi.

14. Graeme Symons. *Jar*. Winner of Fremantle Markets Ceramics Award. 70 cms high. Photo Janet Kovesi.

15. Mary St. John. *Stoneware plate*. 29 cms square.

16. Mary St. John. *Inlaid porcelain jars*. Height of tallest 17 cms.

17. Janet Kovesi. *4 cup stoneware teapot, Kaki* glaze, wax-resist decoration. 14 cms high. Photo Janet Kovesi.

18. Janet Kovesi. *Stoneware breadplate*. Slip trailing under clear glaze. 28 cms dia. Photo Janet Kovesi.

Perth. Experimental, but still functional pieces prepared for exhibitions often lead to spin-offs for shop items. Mary works in stoneware and porcelain. The latter is carved and inlaid with slips, and both materials are reduction-fired in a gas kiln.

Wendy Binks is another potter who relishes the lifestyle. She is constantly amused when others express amazement at her profession.

A Crafts Board workshop grant gave Wendy the chance to develop a well-equipped studio, and she'd rather work there than sell her work. 'I hate selling my pots as I still take it personally when someone doesn't like one of my pieces.'

Visitors to the *Ten-moku* gallery had better ensure Wendy is not behind the counter when they examine and comment on her works.

Cheryl Rimmer was at teacher's college when she learned that one could actually make pots for a living. This was a revelation.

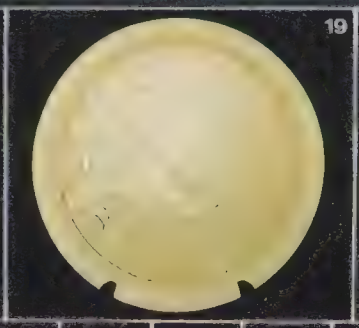
Cheryl's work has an alluring practical note. 'Finish, pattern and form, equilibrium in a pot are important features. For me a pot must come together as a whole . . . '

Janet Kovesi is one of the older members of *Ten-moku*, beginning her affair with clay in 1954. As her work reveals, she is influenced by the British pottery tradition. She and Cheryl Rimmer share the same functional concerns.

While Janet looks over her shoulder at the English style, she says, 'I think there is still room for individuality within a traditional framework.'

Graeme Symons is a transplanted New Zealander who, like Janet Kovesi, has spent time in England. He is a self-taught potter and after six years at the wheel, he still considers himself an apprentice. Joan Campbell has been an influence but this relationship has been a matter of attitude rather than style.

Dorothea Hirschfelder, like many Australian potters, is



attracted by Shoji Hamada pots and his philosophy. Dorothea came to Australia from Germany as an adventure. Her adventure ended at the doors of Claremont Teachers' College when she had her first introduction to pottery. She later trained at the Perth Technical College.

Dorothea has maintained her interest in teaching by teaching high school and tech students.

Fran Martin also trained at Perth Technical College and completed her diploma last year. She is *Ten-moku*'s most recent member. Fran began with hand-built technique and enjoyed slabbing and folding approaches to sculptural works. Like many recent students, she enjoys technical experimentation and is looking toward sawdust-smoking and pit-firing.

Ann Gordon is another Western Australian who scavenges the coastline for seaweed and other materials for pit-firing. She isn't interested in functional ware and enjoys the 'primitive'.

Ann told ***Craft Australia***, 'When I'm not feeling so primitive, I make my landscape pieces in the *neriage* technique. These are usually layered slab forms or spheres . . . '

After five years, *Ten-moku* shows every sign of continuing. With its critical mass of ten potters, the collective produces enough energy to maintain the gallery and the co-operative spirit.

The group certainly contains some diverse styles. This pluralism suggests there is strength in diversity. The ten-potter co-operative seems an ideal way to maintain a retail presence and a public image without abandoning one's individuality.

19. Fran Martin. *Platter*. Underglaze pencil decoration under clear glaze. Fired in electric kiln 1280°C. 38 cms diameter.

20. Fran Martin. *Shell Form*. White clay, white crystalline glaze. Fired electric kiln 1280°C. 20 × 14 cms.

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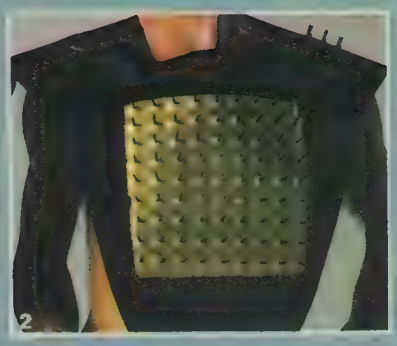


Soft-core Aggression Michael Anderson's Jewellery

Susan Cohn

In any workshop environment in which two or more craftspeople are working, a certain degree of cross stimulation and personal rapport exists. One of the most rewarding benefits of this is the ability to follow the continual development of one's working companions, both in their actual work, and their personal confidence. Such a situation came my way when Michael Anderson, a Sydney College of the Arts jewellery graduate, joined Workshop 3000, the Melbourne-based access jewellery workshop, in July 1983. Michael had a 12 month Crafts Board traineeship programme.

The role of the trainee in Workshop 3000 is working alongside the other jewellers, learning through regular interaction. Michael Anderson came to Workshop 3000 to further his investigations into two ideas, the exploration of rubber as a material and ritual adornment. Whilst the investigation of material was an ongoing process, the interest in ritual adornment came to fruition as the major set piece series in his post traineeship exhibition.

The strong unifying element in Michael's current work, the use of the rubber spike, developed from his undergraduate investigation of rubber as a material. He was initially attracted to the rubber spike because it light-heartedly expressed aggression in visual terms, yet its immediate tactile character was one of softness and flexibility. This ambiguity remains one of the most powerful images repeated throughout his work. It is also an element that strongly attracts the non-craftsperson to his work. The positive response to this ambiguity seems universal. To pick up a piece of Michael's jewellery, bristling with dense black spikes, only to find the spikes give way to touch is surprising even when one knows the composition of the piece. This jewellery comes across as a light-hearted response to what Michael sees as the aggressiveness of much of present day urban life. Most obvious, say, in the punk fashion of recent years.

In a Workshop 3000 group exhibition at Devise Gallery in 1983 one could see the early response to his use of the rubber spike. These pieces ranged from a group of bracelets made from stainless steel tube with multiple groups of spikes to form 'Crown of Thorns' imagery, stainless steel plate brooches with spikes asserting themselves aggressively, to multiple individual spikes that appear as earrings or progressions of points attached to the body.

The latter part of Michael's traineeship was spent in producing work for his first solo exhibition held at Devise Gallery in mid-1984. Here the work was clearly divided into two parts, rings and vests. The rings were a wide range of bands modified to take many different versions of the spike, multiples, small spikes and an exciting group with a single, large, very long spike that curved seductively. These forms, when seen on the hand, remind one of ritual dancers of the east.

The vests, however, formed the main part of the exhibition. Building on his interest in ritual adornment, this exhibition was to combine a means of wearing the spike as decoration along with the use of sheet rubber to create repetitive three-dimensional, wearable elements in large scale.

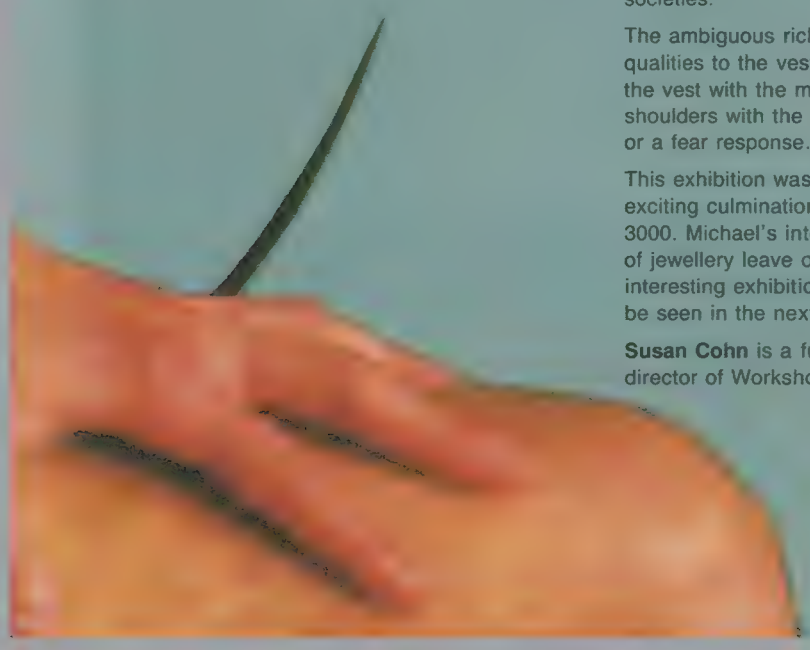
The repetition in the use of nine spike multiples as the basic element of pattern-making suggests mysterious significance. This mystery together with other elements of the pieces, such as gold leaf, is used to represent symbolic imagery such as power and wealth. The manner of presentation gives the pieces their ritual sense. This ritual quality resides in accepted, if somewhat eccentric, adornment that refers to ecclesiastical garb, or traditional dress from other societies.

The ambiguous richness of the spikes lend special qualities to the vests, and is most powerfully seen in the vest with the multiple rows of spikes along the shoulders with the suggestion of 'raising the hackles' or a fear response.

This exhibition was very powerful, and a strong and exciting culmination of Michael's year at Workshop 3000. Michael's interest in exploiting the wider aspects of jewellery leave one confident that many more interesting exhibitions of Michael Anderson's work will be seen in the next few years.

Susan Cohn is a full-time jeweller and a founding director of Workshop 3000.

1. 2. Michael Anderson. *Rubber vest.* #1 from a series of 9. Natural rubber, neoprene rubber, gold leaf. 1984. Photo Kate Gollings.



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3. Michael Anderson. *Nine Spikes on Chest.* Rubber spike pins. 925 silver. 1983.

4. Michael Anderson. *Nine Spikes on Shoulder.* Rubber spike pins. 925 silver. 1983.

5. Michael Anderson. *Spikey Bracelet.* Bracelet. Stainless steel tubing, rubber.

6. Michael Anderson. *Nine Disappearing Spikes.* Brooch. Rubber, stainless steel. 1983.

7. 8. Michael Anderson. *Rubber vest.* #3 from a series of 9. natural rubber, neoprene rubber, gold leaf. 1984. Rings, 850 silver. 1984. Photo Kate Gollings.

Dawn for Custom Cutlers

Laurie Drake

1. Max Harvey. *Fighter/Dagger.* 295 mm. (Value $220.00)
2. Max Harvey. *Japanese Tanto.* 305 mm.
3. Scott Webb. *Custom knife.*
4. Scott Webb. *Custom knife.*
5. Scott Webb. *Custom knife.*
6. Scott Webb. *Custom knife.*

Light is beginning to shine in the world of cold steel. Australia's custom cutlers, the makers of handcrafted knives, are in the spotlight at last.

'We still get the 'you make what?' question most of the time, but at last there's an awareness of our work', says one of the men. 'It's been a long time coming, but Australia now has enough collectors, investors and users of fine knives to give us confidence . . .'.

The Australian backblocks and its demands have made many an outdoor adventurer a knifemaker, but it wasn't until the 1970s that the knifemaking emerged.

Men like the late George Lee Sye in Cairns and Murray Lanthois in Adelaide began turning out knives designed to please the eye and the hand. Publicity followed and slowly the 'industry' gathered momentum.

George was only able to become a full-time knifemaker by 1978 and although several others have that goal, prices and demand need to climb before the cutlers consider it practical. 'Guesstimates' put the number of Australians regularly making knives for sale at around 30, probably ten times the number who were grinding a decade ago.

In the home of custom knifemaking, the USA, there are around 400 full-timers. The leading makers are hero-worshipped, there are three periodicals, a library of books and hundreds of catalogues devoted entirely to hand-crafted cutlery. The industry stages annual knife shows that attract thousands of enthusiasts and every outdoors person who's serious about their job or recreation carries a hand-made knife or even two.

Just over 20 years after the man generally credited with starting the US industry, W.D. Randall, produced his first blade, a considerable number of makers put $5,000 price tags on their knives and waiting lists of up to ten years.

In Australia, makers battle to buy supplies of suitable materials, most resorting to importing from specialist suppliers in the USA at great cost to the pocket and the patience. The 'normal' supply sources have minima of approximately 2,000 lb of steel per order. It would take the average Aussie knifemaker a few centuries to grind through all that.

A few do their own heat-treating of blades but most have spent wearying, frustrating sessions trying to find heat-treaters who will take their tempering seriously, or do a consistent, quality job on one-off products.

But that's the grimy side of life as an Australian knifemaker. It's more than compensated for by the joy of creation, the satisfaction of personal achievement and the looks of pleasure on customers' faces.

Most makers say their heads and hands are full of new ideas and energies, and for some, the striving for another notch of perfection has become a slave-driving demon. Along with the clock that says there are only 24 hours in a day, there are families, jobs and other interests to be fitted in somewhere.

Australia will never reach the sheer numbers of the US industry, but reports filtering back from collectors and the few makers who have made the pilgrimage to the US knife guild shows or spent time with American craftworkers, confirm the quality some of our makers are producing.

One major problem here is that our makers are so few and so scattered over such a large country, most have not even seen the work of their compatriots. A few have exhibited at gun and craft shows, and the National Gallery of Victoria bought John Stapleton's skinning knife that won the Crafts Council of SA award at the Royal Adelaide Show in 1983.

But one of the reasons for new optimism is the 1984 formation of an Australian Knifemakers' Guild and the

West Coast Knife Makers' Club. Queenslander Roy Hopwood and Sydneysider Peter Brown have been credited with getting the Guild going and Perth's Max Harvey says the West Coasters club was formed to help promote the Guild. '. . . and because we were lucky enough to have a few makers reasonably close to one another'.

The purpose of the Guild is to promote the craft to the public, to exchange ideas and to establish a Code of Ethics. It will also publish a regular newsletter. Peter Brown says the public is largely unaware of the fact that good quality hand-made knives are available in Australia and at reasonable prices. One way of advancing all the aims is to organise Australia's first knife show and plans are in the embryonic stage now.

Full membership of the Guild is open to any knifemaker selling knives to the public and collectors, engravers or anyone else interested in the craft can become an associate. The Foundation membership was 16 makers.

Following are brief details of some of Australia's knifemakers; some are members of the Guild, others are not.

Wally Bidgood, 19 Wellington Street, Mornington, Vic. 3913.

Wally began making knives in 1978 with files and wet and dry paper. He switched to a belt-grinder in 1983 and now all his knives are hollow ground from 4 mm D2 steel, satin-finished to a hardness on the Rockwell D scale of 58-59 for excellent edge-holding. He designs a full tapered tang, brass guards, bolts and thong-holes, with a contrasting liner between steel and handle material. Wally prefers using natural handle materials such as stag, redgum, walnut and rosewood, but also offers the more durable Micarta in ivory, green, black or maroon. He has long been interested in using knives through his work as an outdoor council supervisor and his recreation which includes family camping, fishing, hunting and skindiving. About 75 per cent of his knives are bought by hunters, the rest by collectors.

Peter Brown, 8 Myra Avenue, Ryde, NSW 2112.

Unsatisfactory experiences with factory knives on hunting trips led this office worker to confound his school metalwork teacher and spend the last three years making knives. 'It's taken a lot of hard work and a tidy sum of money, but my knives are now an acceptable quality', he says. He uses 440C steel because of its rust resistance and edge holding ability, and does his own heat treating to 58-59Rc, with a little less for fishing knives. Handle materials include a range of Micartas, ebony, rosewood, mulga and cocobola, and guards and bolsters are either brass or nickel silver. He enjoys the challenge of making knives to a customer's design, and has made a short sword, fighting and hunting knives, Bowies and fishing knives.

Jon Byrnes, 27 Flynn Avenue, Barraba, NSW 2347.

As a trophy hunter, John became aware that the knives he was using were too big and the wrong shape, so began cutting up cross cut saw blades and making his own. He progressed to importing German and English knife steels and under the Viet Nam influence made trench and combat knives. Then, influenced by the great American maker Bob Loveless, this Australian bowls greenkeeper turned to drop-point hunter designs and knives as an art form. He now uses 440C steel and Micarta handles, but in the past he has also used natural materials such as buffalo horn, wood and stag antler. He also does scrimshaw on the handles.

7. Wally Bidgood. *Big River Skinner.*
8. Wally Bidgood. *Moroka.* Sheath knife.
9. Joe Zemetis. *Sheath knife.*
10. Joe Zemetis. *Sheath knife.*
11. Myron Husiak. *Sheath knife.*
12. Myron Husiak. *Folding knife.*

Peter Brown.
Custom knife. 360 mm blade. Steel, ebony, brass.
Photo Simon Critchley.

13-20. Ross Gillard. *Skinning knives.* Handmade sheath.

Gary Butler, 3/110 Harris Street, Welshpool, WA 6106.

A lawn-mower blade was Gary's first venture into the knifemaking world at the age of 12. There have been many knives since then, but he still enjoys making them. He derives much the same pleasure as he found in his former profession as an architect. He favours small knives, particularly folders. These have marine grade stainless steel cases that can be taken apart with a screwdriver, a factor which helps to produce a strong, easily cleaned knife. He is also building a bench grinder, specifically designed for knifemakers and has his eye on the overseas market.

Russ Gillard, 2 Marenoa Place, Clifton Grove via Orange, NSW 2800.

Russ made his first knife 30 years ago at age seven by grinding an edge onto an old hacksaw blade and wrapping string around for a handle. A sheet metal worker these days, he prefers to make 'using' knives, but has sold quite a few to collectors. His three favourite designs are drop points, heavy towards the tip. These are ideal, he says, for Australia's thin-skinned game. The index finger notch on the underside enables the notch to be used as a thumbrest when the knife is inverted. He has tried several types of steel, but prefers 440C and timber for handles. Apart from knives he also enjoys shooting and working with his hands.

Max Harvey, 14 Bass Road, Bull Creek, WA 6153.

He became fascinated by knives, particularly Bowies, while a Boy Scout. Years later he asked Australian Jeff Taylor to make him two knives and before they were completed he had become a student knifemaker. Subsequent visits to the US and sessions with four top American makers turned his interest to an obsession. His preferences these days still include the Bowie, but have widened to include sub-hilt fighters and drop point skinners, artistic, but functional. Max uses D2 and 440C steels, and for his handles, timbers such as jamwood and cocobola.

Chris and Michael Hertzfeld, 15 Pennayoona Street, Hallett Cove Estate, SA 5158.

Michael is 18 and a science student; Chris is 20 and a television lighting assistant. Together, they've made more than 400 knives in the last six years. Murray Lanthois was their teacher, but they quickly began developing their own designs '. . . and after about four years started to feel happy with our quality'. They use D2 and 440C steels hardened to 59Rc, and a great variety of handle materials, obsidium, opal, lace-blue agate, tiger-eye, fiddlestick blackwood, redgum, cocobola, walnut and aluminium. Many knives sell overseas, and around Australia. Working knives seem to go to WA and Queensland and collectors' knives to NSW and Victoria. They prefer to make big, exotic, fancy models.

Myron Husiak, 16 Hex Street, Tottenham, Vic 3012.

He built a knife as a youngster and started seriously about 1976 when he followed an article in **Popular Mechanics**. He keeps no permanent template, so even the standard designs are constantly evolving, but over the years, he's turned out skinners, game and boot knives, and combat and Bowie knives. Myron says, 'I like the mean and nasty look'. He gives a choice of 440C or the more expensive 154CM rust-resistant steels and prefers to use Micarta for handles. It's not as likely to move with changes in humidity as natural materials. However, he also loves working with ivory, ram's horn and buffalo. Orders are increasing and this office worker is hopeful of going full-time knifemaking.

21. Chris and Michael Hertzfeld. *Bowie knife.*
22. Chris and Michael Hertzfeld. *Sheath knife.*
23. Chris and Michael Hertzfeld. *Skinning knife.*
24. Chris and Michael Herzfeld. *Skinning knife.*
25. John Stapleton. *Sheath knife.*
26. John Stapleton. *Wakala.* Clip point skinner.
27. John Stapleton. *Sheath knife.*
28. John Stapleton. *Witana.* Drop point skinner.
29. Daniel Jenkins. *Camping knife.* 290 mm. Forged and folded steel.

Daniel Jenkins, Milltons Goldsmiths & Silversmiths, 116 Maling Road, Canterbury, Vic 3126.

Daniel has been forging knives for about four years, using various steels before settling on the 01 alloy. Primarily he makes knives for kitchen use, and occasionally table knives for carving. Relying on few elements for visual interest, Daniel allows the hammered forging texture to dominate, aided then by the shape of the blade and handle to suit the function of the knife and perhaps exotic woods, when they are available, for the grips. Daniel only forges the blades, therefore no material is cut away and wasted as in stock-removal, allowing for more freedom in blade shapes, subtle line changes along the edge, spine and point. If he sees the need to vary the length of the tang or blade or drop the point he can put the steel back in the fire to shrink or stretch the metal under the hammer.

Sam Richards, c/o Post Office Olinda, Victoria 3788.

Sam's initial interest in knives came from associations and experiences as a gold and silversmithing student at RMIT. 'Influences have come from many sources', he says 'but from the Japanese swordmaker, Satsuo Ando I saw craftsmanship as a lifestyle, I was privileged to participate in one of his Australian workshops'. At present Sam is using 01 and 440C steels in the making of blades; handles have been made from Australian and exotic timbers as well as several synthetic materials. Sam enjoys making working knives as well as ceremonial knives.

Ted Ryan, 17 Rona Street, Ferntree Gully, Vic 3156.

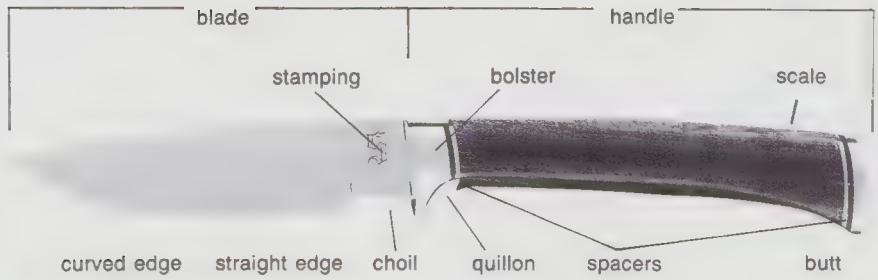
Ted has an armed services background and made his first knife in 1965. It wasn't until the end of 1979 that he took to an old hacksaw blade and began getting serious about knifemaking. He soon had a range of knives and people as diverse as guards, police, businesspeople and truck drivers buying them. All the knives are still 'hacked and filed by hand' without the use of a grinding machine. He uses D2, a medium carbon steel from Sweden, and he makes handles from top grain wood and Micarta imported from the USA. He also repairs knives, particularly the older style (big blades and pocket knives) and does heat treating for other knife-makers around Melbourne.

Kurt Simmonds, Lot 1 Yates Street, Castlemaine, Vic 3450.

His 'usual early efforts' were made from car springs and old files, but knifemaking really took off for him in the mid-1970s when he became involved with a group interested in medieval battle re-enactments. Daggers, axes, swords and spears were all made with files, but a domestic disagreement over allocation of time closed his shop until three years ago. Then this apprentice-supervisor bought a belt grinder and specialised in large, robust lockback folding hunters, although now he's turning out Bowies and other fixed blade styles. Handle materials include ivory, tortoiseshell, stag and exotic woods and Micarta. Steel is 440C unless requested otherwise. Many have filework and inlays.

John Stapleton, 37 Ernest Crescent, Happy Valley, SA 5159.

Seven years ago this engineering pattern maker became so frustrated trying to find a knife that would hold its edge, he attacked a broken old chisel, and changed the direction of his life. He says his early attempts and research were akin to re-inventing the wheel, but he eventually developed his own processes, techniques and designs, and after two years was relatively happy with his work. He made a number of folders, fighting knives for soldiers and fishing and skinning knives. But he has gradually turned from the functional to the collector market. He uses mainly 440C steel with some D2 and 01 and his handle materials include purple heart, buffalo horn, mallee



John Stapleton knife.

root, mulga and stag. New styles have evolved as a result of his successful showing at the 1984 US Guild knife show.

Bill Tarplee, PO Box 11, Dickson, ACT 2602.

Bill began making knives 25 years ago from old car springs, and annealing them in mum's wood stove. As the man behind **Australian Survivor** Magazine, he makes his own tools and draws heavily on information forgotten in the rush of progress. This ex-craft teacher, magazine editor/author and investigator into the 'old' forms of knowledge usually works with carbon steels, because of their versatility in forging and grinding. He's also interested in producing damascus steels for use in blackpowder rifles. He gives most of his knives away to friends, and has produced an unusually useful book called **An Introduction to Basic Knifemaking**, with three other knife books in the pipeline.

Jeff Taylor, 4 Ruby Court, Armadale, WA 6112.

His interest in knives began when he spent his 13th birthday present money on a Joseph Rodgers' knife. He bought more knives and as the prices rose, so did his critical analysis of them. In 1974 he began making his own. He has a leaning towards combat/survival and hunter/survival knives, but will make almost anything that appeals to his eye. In fact, he'd rather try something different each time, rather than turn out a dozen of the same style. He has gone off hollow handle survival knives, which he considers a gimmick. He imports stain-resistant steels and a wide variety of colourful and exotic handle materials. He's an active member of the State Emergency Service, a bowhunter and a quiver-maker.

Dennis Vince, 39 Luckie Crescent, Ipswich, Qld 4305.

A keen bowhunter, he became disenchanted with the design of a top brand knife, and decided it might be easier to make his own. After a long time and many mistakes, he found some magazine articles which at least told him the right materials to use, so he started afresh. Successfully, this time. He buys almost all his supplies from the USA including the D2 and 440C steels. He prefers 440C for its corrosion resistance. The biggest frustration has been finding out what to use and where to get it.

Scott Webb, 85 Laxton Road, Pallara, Qld 4110.

His first knives were an experiment for a friend who wanted to know where he could get a decent knife. That was two years ago, only about three years after leaving school and beginning work with his custom gunsmith father. His interests include shooting, fishing, drawing and engraving and he has applied practical and artistic flair to his knives, building whatever his customers order. Most are skinners and capers, with 75 per cent original designs. He prefers 440C, but will use D2 steel, stainless, nickel silver or brass for hilts, butt caps, pins and/or rivets, and handle materials include ivory, antler, Micarta and wood guaranteed eight years seasoned. Engraving is a speciality.

Joe Zemitis, 14 Currawong Road, Cardiff Hts, Newcastle, NSW 2285.

When he was nine years old and still in the Greta migrant camp in 1950, he found a pocket knife and began carving wooden knives. The movie *The Iron Mistress* turned him towards steel, and he produced a Bowie knife from an old spring. For the last three years, though, he has seriously been producing Bowies, boot, cooking and hunting knives, mostly for hunters. 440C and 01 steel are used, and natural handle materials include ivory, stag, whale teeth and wood, as well as Micarta. He enjoys putting fancy file work onto the back of the blade. He is open to the suggested designs of his customers.

Laurie Drake is an outdoors adventurer journalist and has written and edited in this field for some time.

30. Sam Richards. *Ceremonial knife.* Steel, brass, zebrawood. (5/6) Photo Michael Day.
31. Kurt Simmonds. *Folding knife.*
32. Kurt Simmonds. *Sheath knife.*
33. Kurt Simmonds. *Sheath knife.*
34. Kurt Simmonds. *Folding knife.*
35. Kurt Simmonds. *Folding knife.*

Peter Brown
Fishing knife 176 mm
Steel, ebony, brass
Photo Simon Critchley

36-39. First year project: Russel Wilson, Tim Denmead, Mavro Vecchi, Berto Pandolfo, Tony Glynn, Tim Blakely. Canberra College of Advanced Education, Industrial Design.

40. Kate Hunter. *Buffalo Horn Knife*. South Australian CAE. 1984.

41. Ron McDonald. *Boot Knife*. Tasmanian CAE. 1982.

42-43. Pat Skovfis. *Paper knives*. Melbourne CAE. 1983.

44. Steven Craig. *Sculptural Knives*. Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education. 1984.

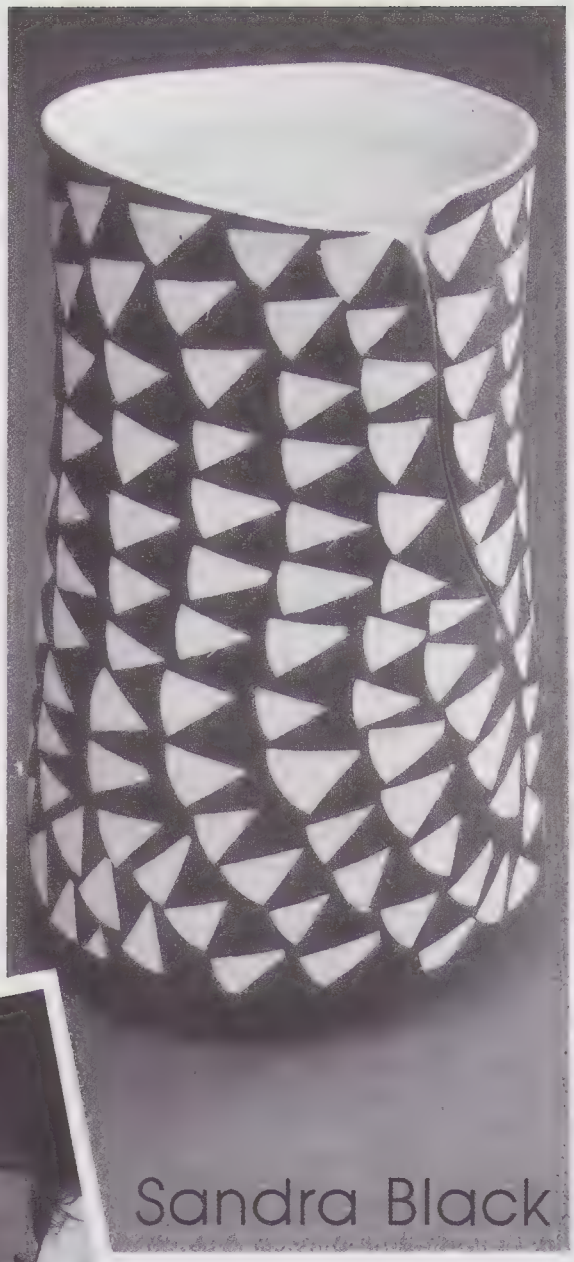
45. Sheridan Kennedy. *Ornamental knife*. Silver, porcelain, black coral. Queensland College of Art. 1984.

1. *Cone Vase: Conus marmorens.* Porcelain, stencil and air brushed slip, glazed interior. 7 x 4 cm. 1980. Photo Leon Bird.

2. *Flying Bird Vase.* Porcelain, black slip inlay, glazed interior. 10 x 4 cm. 1980. Photo Mt. Lawley C.A.E.

3. *Flying Bird Sphere.* Porcelain, carved and clear glaze. 5 x 5 cm. 1981. Photo Leon Bird.

4. *Flying Bird Box* Porcelain. Carved and dry glaze. 1981.



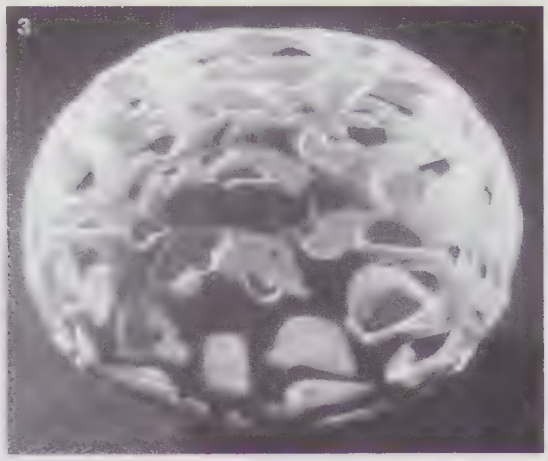


Photo John Teschendorff and Sandra Bain

Sandra Black

Towards an aesthetic presence in porcelain and china 1971–1984

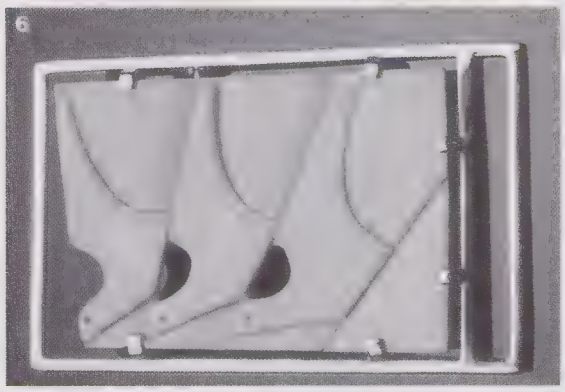
John Teschendorff

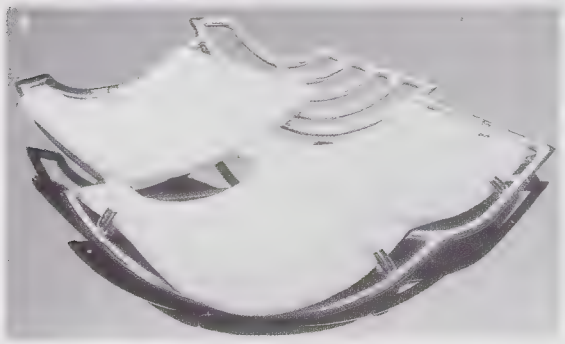
It is within the context of transition from art teacher to artist that Sandra Black identifies the influences that have shaped both her philosophy and her pots.

Like so many of her generation, Black finds little to reflect upon when considering the value of her art teaching diploma in more than purely vocational terms. Her teaching art in Perth is perhaps the only positive aspect of her early years. Equipped with only the most basic clay-play skills that were designed to allow a young teacher to entertain her thirteen year old primate charges; the mysteries of clay preparation, glaze technology and kiln firing were real indeed.

When an unexpected staff transfer at her school occurred in early 1971, Black found herself not only in charge of ceramics but in need of information.

The information came from an exceptional source and provided the catalyst that transformed the young art teacher into an artist. Sandra explains, 'Joan Campbell was rather overwhelming, although always warm and encouraging to everyone in our summer school group (at the University of WA). I believe she was a great teacher, not so much from the point of the technologist as from encouraging me to develop a personal philosophy, a personal attitude towards clay'.





Sandra went on to enroll in Mike Kusnik's ceramic chemistry classes at the Perth Technical College and continued her association with Joan Campbell at the University of Western Australia.

As she worked in fine stoneware and occasionally porcelain, her evolving imagery reflected affinities with the Western Australian coastline, the sea and particularly with the cone-shaped seashells that have remained a source of inspiration. The growing need to choose between art teaching and a full-time commitment to ceramics was neatly solved in 1975 when David Walker invited her to be the first resident graduate craftsperson at WAIT.

'This move into a professional environment was as important as working with Joan Campbell and Mike Kusnik, for when I went east to the First National Ceramics Conference in Sydney in 1978, comparisons were able to be made in a professional context . . '. Sandra says. 'Although the reasons for my working with clay were perhaps different to many artists in the eastern states, it was a delight to discover that isolation had not inhibited the development of what I believed to be essential craftsmanship.'

The period between 1978 and 1981 allowed for further resolution of technical methodologies and the development of production skills for working with fine porcelain. From her first tentative experiments in 1974, she found the fragility and delicacy of porcelain well suited to the production of images now ranging far from her earlier coastal references and *Conus marmorens*. The exotic repeated patination of Dutch artist Maurits Escher and the geometric architectural surface of *Art Déco* became the source of series of bowls, boxes and spheres.

A new confidence to extend the parameters of the material can be sensed in these works. The surfaces are pierced, incised, carved and slashed to expose the very limits of clay and the deft classical skills of the artist.

It is no surprise that several of Sandra Black's 'diversions' are prominent during this period of exploration.

'Even when I was living in Perth,' Sandra said, 'something completely different would emerge every couple of years . . .'. In 1981 a jewellery collaboration with her sister Jeanette Kettle resulted in an exhibition of carved porcelain modules set in finely articulated gold and silver mounts, whilst the influence of Robert Bell's 'different way of approaching clay', resulted in the 'Construction Pieces', first produced in 1981. Although only a small number of these spatially articulated linear containers for containers have been produced, they indicate Black's real ability to confront much more than surface and decoration. Her comment that 'public reaction was not so hot' carries more than a trace of disappointment, perhaps acknowledging that her environment had developed pre-conceived notions of expectation.

In March 1982 she moved to the east, always a possibility, but never considered necessary until the Canberra School of Art extended an invitation to be artist-in-residence and part-time lecturer within the ceramics department. The return to an art school environment with its philosophical complexity and artistic energy coincided with a re-appreciation of bone-china. Working closely with the ubiquitous Dr Owen Rye allowed development of a range of bone-china slips, bodies, and glazes that not only encouraged greater surface definition but introduced seductive translucency. Dialogue with the painter Wendy Stavrianos initiated an unstructured painterly

5. *Déco Bowl*. Porcelain, carved and polished. 8 × 7 cm. 1984. Photo Don Semmens.

6. *Bird Brooch* Porcelain and silver. 1981.

7. *Escher Bird Brooch.* Carved porcelain. 9 ct gold setting by Jeanette Kettle. Collection Art Gallery of W.A. 1981. Photo Leon Bird.

8. *Slip Plate*. Porcelain, brushed slip and stains, incised surface. 35 cm. 1984. Photo Don Semmens.

9. *Lace Bowl.* Slipcast and pierced bone china. 5 x 12 cm. 1983. Photo Leon Bird.

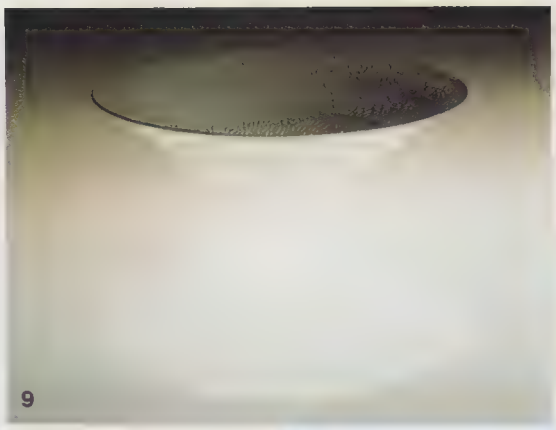
10. *Painted Vase* Porcelain. 1982.

11. *Painted Vase.* Slipcast bone china, brushed slip, incised and lustred. 15 x 6 cm. 1984. Photo Don Semmens.

12. *Construction.* Porcelain, air brushed dry glaze, wire binding. 15 x 8 cm. 1981. Photo Greg Woodward.

13. *Painted Bowl.* Slipcast bone china, brushed slip and incised surface. 11 x 10 cm. 1984. Photo Don Semmens.

14. *Pierced Vase.* Porcelain, pierced and polished, unglazed. 9 x 5 cm. 1981. Photo Leon Bird.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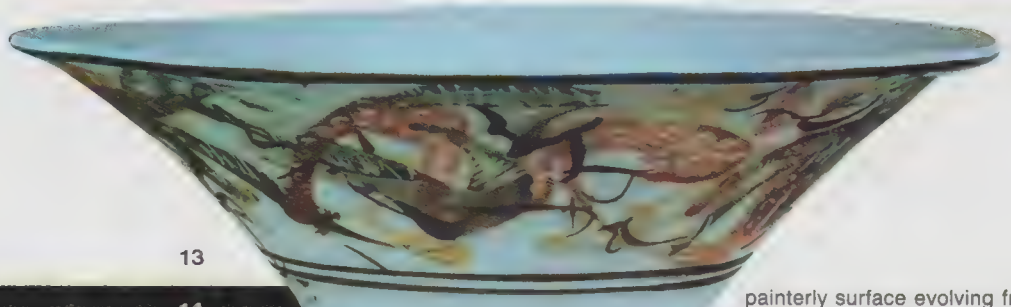
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painterly surface evolving from the more formalistic 'Encounter Plates' and 'New Wave Bowls' and it is within the context of colour that much of her excitement for the future lies.

Her current teaching contract at the Bendigo C.A.E. finishes in May 1985 and already there are thoughts of the elusive Perth studio. Although there is no idiosyncratic regionality that makes Sandra Black's imagery specifically Western Australian, it is the acknowlegement of her recent past that makes return inevitable.

Peter Haines of the Canberra School of Art recognised the other inevitability when he wrote in a 1983 catalogue introduction for their gallery '. . . all her pieces are accompanied by a sensitive and individual approach to the world around her which makes Sandra Black's work an important and significant contribution to the art of ceramics'.

It is not unrealistic to anticipate that Sandra's aesthetic presence will transcend the superficiality of object. Yet, regardless of outcome, her search is more important within the wider context of contemporary visual arts in Australia.

John Teschendorff is the co-ordinator of studies for Bachelor of Education Art Craft degree at Melbourne College of Advanced Education. He is also Chairman of the 4th National Ceramics Conference for 1985.

Tasmania's Premier Craft Collection

The Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

Chris Tassell

The Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, has an interest in contemporary and historical crafts dating from late last century. In 1982, only a few years after opening to the public, it acquired a number of Tasmanian craftworks exhibited in the 1891 International Exhibition held in Launceston and the first such exhibition in Tasmania. Amongst these works was the silver Launceston Rowing Club Trophy in the form of the Club's boathouse complete with rowing boat made by the Launceston silversmith F.R. Stewart. As might be expected for such a Victorian institution, the Museum also acquired a variety of European decorative arts from the exhibition.

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1. Susan Cohn. *Bracelet.* Pressed aluminium form anodised and dyed blue. 1983. Purchased 1983.

2. Margaret Ainscow. *Assemblage with Stitch III.* 1983. Purchased 1983.

3. *Richard Clements. Bottles with stoppers.* Free blown glass. 1983. Purchased 1983.

In later years the acquisition of Australian and European decorative arts continued.

Substantial additions to the collections of Australian craft were made with the purchase of the Beattie Collection in 1927. This very large and diverse collection relating largely to Tasmania's past included fine examples of the island's craftsmen such as the potter Alexander Worbey who was active in Hobart during the 1880s and the many anonymous convicts and sailors whose skills contributed so much to Tasmania during the nineteenth century. The collection also included a large collection of the work of the potter John Price who was active at Port Arthur between 1888–1912. Price was frequently commissioned by Beattie to provide items to be sold at Beattie's museum in Hobart. This collection formed the core of the recent exhibition *Port Arthur Pottery* organised by this museum.

During the following years occasional examples of Tasmanian crafts continued to be acquired but it was not until the early 1960s that the acquisition of contemporary Australian crafts really began. In 1964 a number of works including those by Col Levy, Mollie Douglas and Ivan Englund were purchased from the Australian and New Zealand Pottery Exhibition touring Australian galleries. Thereafter ceramics continued to be purchased and this medium now forms the core of the Museum's decorative arts and craft collection. Initially the works purchased reflected the strong influence of Bernard Leach and Shoji Hamada and, in fact, work by Bernard Leach was purchased in 1972. However in the same year the first non-functional ceramics, the pop art of Lorraine Jenyns' brightly coloured *Peacock* pot and Margaret Dodd's whimsical *Holden Baby Feed* also entered the collection.

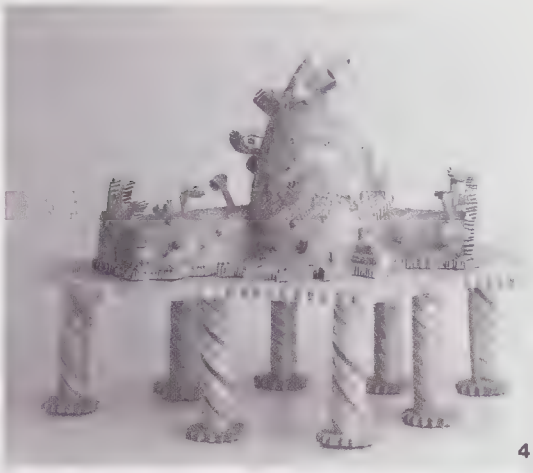
This emphasis on ceramics is matched by the development of the collections of the products of Launceston commercial potteries John Campbell Pty. Ltd. and McHugh Bros. Pty. Ltd., the largest potteries in Tasmania. Both Campbells who began in 1881 and McHughs in 1879, co-operated closely and produced a

4. Bronwyn Kemp. *Pavillion*. 1983. Purchased 1981.

5. Rowena Gough. *Extended Bracelet Form*. Purchased 1983.

6. Ashley Cartwright. *Corner Writing Desk*. 1981. Purchased 1981.

7. Peter Meure. *Huon Pine Bowl*. 1983. Purchased 1983.



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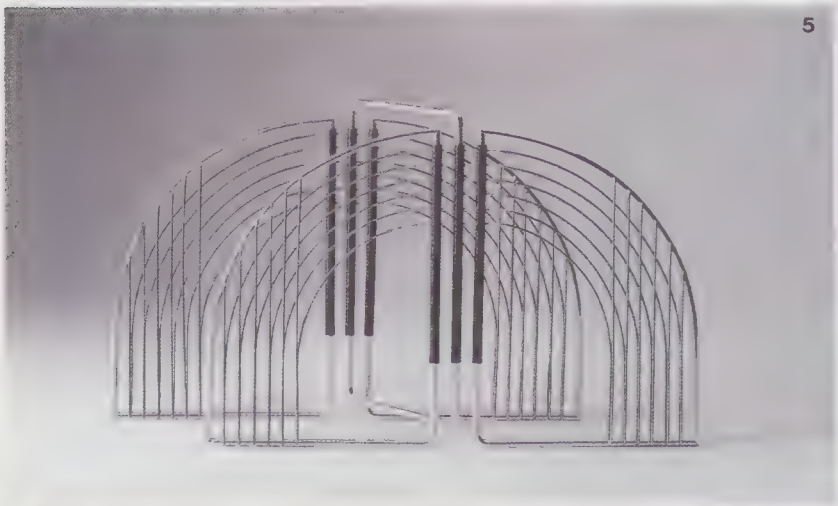

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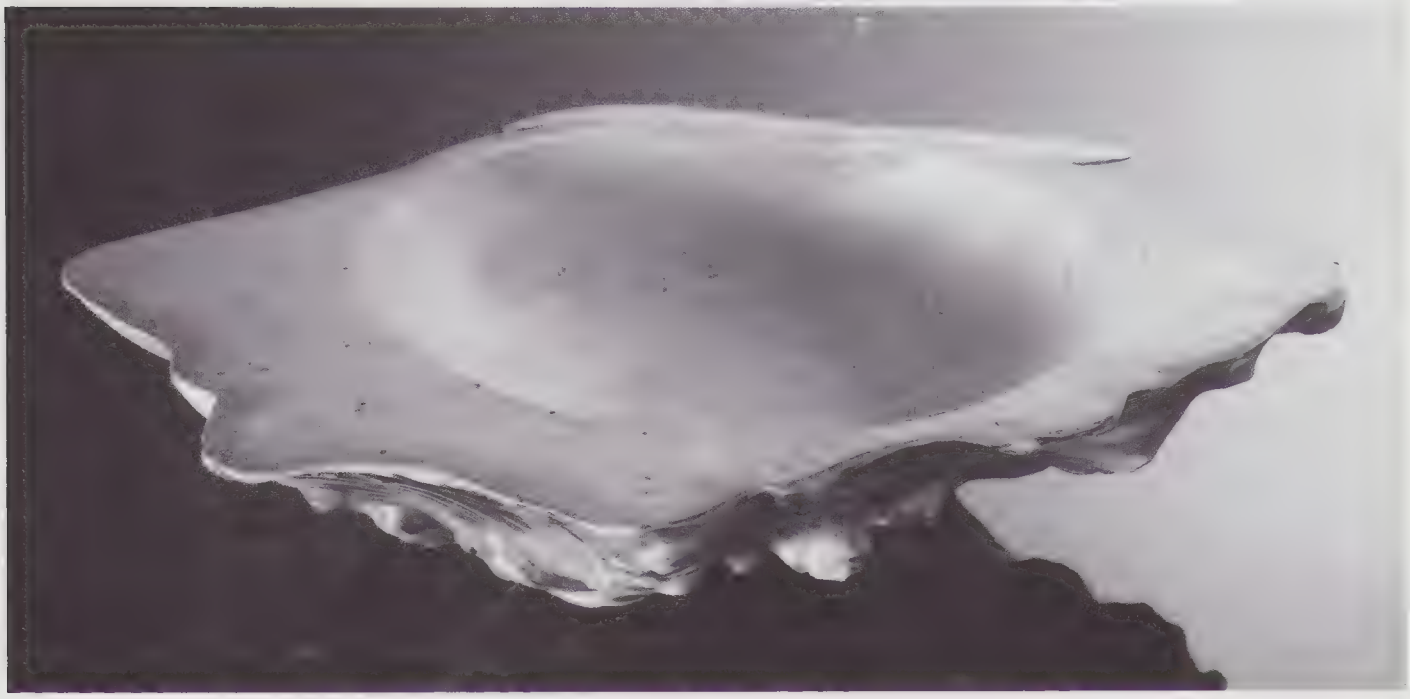

wide range of domestic ware including filters, bread plates, teapots, in *majolica* and rockingham as well as industrial items. Similarly the work of Tasmanian studio potters including Violet Mace, Maude Poynter and Mylie Peppin, all active from the 1930s, and Edward and Margaret Shaw, active more recently during the 1950s and 1960s, has been acquired.

The expansion of the contemporary craft collection beyond ceramics began in the late 1970s and is related to a number of events. Not the least of these was the establishment of what has now become the *Launceston Craft Purchase Exhibition*, strongly supported by the Launceston Bank for Savings, and the appointment of a Curator of Craft following a successful Crafts Board funded traineeship. Janet Floyed is the Museum's Curator of Craft. Today, substantial collections of jewellery, textiles, wood and glass have been assembled that reflect current developments.

The development of the principal craft collection in Tasmania has been influenced by the Museum's trustees' strong belief in the important contribution the crafts can make to Tasmania. For this reason the contribution of Tasmanian craftsworkers such as David Ralph in furniture, Peter Meure's turned bowls, Les Blakebrough's ceramics and glass and Kevin Perkins' furniture are well represented.

The work of visiting craftspeople-in-residence whose presence and inspirations have been pivotal to the development of crafts on the island have also entered the collection. Amongst these craftsworkers are English furniture designer and maker Ashley Cartwright whose myrtle and leather corner writing desk was purchased in 1981 and US furniture-maker Jon Brooks who spent six months during 1984 working in Tasmania. The Museum purchased one of his 'Flash Stick series' of music stands in eucalyptus, plywood and acrylic. More recently one of Jayn Thomas' ikats *Flat Out 1984* from her residency was acquired for the textile collection.

There is also an active temporary craft exhibition programme of both contemporary and traditional crafts. Many of these exhibitions tour to other venues in Tasmania supported by the Crafts Board and the Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board.

Chris Tassell is the Director of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery.

8. Jon Brooks. *Music Stand Flash Stick Series.* 1984. Purchased 1984.

9. Garry Greenwood. *Leather sculpture.* 1980. Purchased 1980.

Photos by Mark Bartkevicius.

GLASS BLOWER IN RESIDENCE
A... A..
A..
CHOO!
WOW!
GLASS BLOWER IN RESIDENCE
Leigh Hobbs

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Our Glass Studio

Denis and Rhonda O'Connor

Ken McKenzie

Denis and Rhonda O'Connor have established their *Our Glass Studio* about 25 km from Wagga Wagga, major centre of Australia's Riverina. For Denis this is a return to his roots, he was born in Wagga. The O'Connors' studio was established in 1981 when Denis resigned from Caulfield Institute of Technology (CIT), Melbourne to make his own way in the rapidly developing contemporary Australian studio glass movement.

Denis has been one of the pioneer figures in this development. His career began with formal training in Fine Arts at Newcastle. He was awarded a scholarship from Philips Glass Company (Leonara Glass) in 1973. His first involvement was with design, but, as Denis puts it, 'It didn't take long to begin experimenting and working with the glass'.

In 1974 the Crafts Council sponsored a tour of Queensland, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory with Bill Boysen, a visiting United

1. *Glass Form* 1984. 16cm high × 20cm wide. White glass with coloured stripes, with sandblasted and acid-etched rim.
2. *Glass Form* 1984. 14cm high × 12cm wide. Purple glass with coloured stripes.
3. *Eroded Form*. Blown forms, sandblasted and assembled. Denis O'Connor. Photo Lee Verrall.

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1. *Glass Form* 1984. 20cm high x 8cm wide. Black glass with coloured stripes, sandblasted and acid-etched rim.
2. *Reed Bowl* 1984. 15cm high x 12cm wide. Bowl with two-colour inlay, sandblasted and acid-etched decoration. Designed and decorated by Rhonda O'Connor and blown by Denis O'Connor.
3. *Glass Form* 1984. 18cm high x 22cm wide. White glass with coloured stripes.
4. *Glass Form* 1984. 16cm high x 18cm wide. Black glass with coloured stripes.

States glassblower. That itinerary included a week of demonstrations at the Riverina College South Campus in Wagga. Following this tour, Denis returned to Leonara working with, among others, Julio Santos.

Denis then took a position at Caulfield Institute of Technology, Victoria. Here he built the hot glass facilities and gave lectures. This was the first formal hot glass programme available in Australia.

In 1980 Denis took the opportunity to tour Scandinavia, Great Britain and other parts of Europe and the United States of America. He remembers a fruitful period as assistant to Fynn Lynggaard and a guest for 3 months at the *Skolan für Brugskunst* in Copenhagen, Denmark. In the United Kingdom he worked in glass production with Isle of Wight Glass for 2 months. While in Europe he was able to meet many of the major contemporary glass workers including Klaus Moje, who has recently been appointed to the Canberra School of Art. After 11 months abroad he returned to Caulfield.

By 1981 Caulfield Institute of Technology was a major force in the now rapidly expanding Australian glass movement. Its stable of glass workers now included Klaus Zimmer, Richard Morell and Julio Santos. Jenny Zimmer, an art historian, had also developed a reputation as a critic for the medium.

Before building a studio, assistance from the Crafts Board of the Australia Council allowed Denis and Rhonda to concentrate on individual exhibition pieces, along with producing and marketing a studio range under the *Our Glass Design* trademark.

Denis also found time to hold a teaching workshop in hot glass during an 'Artist in the Community' project during 1982, using the facilities at the Riverina College of Advanced Education. His *Eroded Form Series*, was exhibited at the Wagga City Art Gallery, a gallery noted for its glass collection.

Denis and Rhonda's most recent exhibitions have been at Lyrebird Gallery, Brisbane, Beaver Galleries, Canberra and the Old Brewery Gallery, Wagga Wagga. Both participate regularly in group exhibitions throughout Australia. They were also selected to exhibit in Craft Expo Sydney in 1983 and 1984.

Studio hot glass seems to have arrived in Australia, with several Australian workers being recognised internationally for their technique and design. Its progress owes much to the persistence and faith of such pioneers as Denis O'Connor and Rhonda O'Connor.

4

Enchantress of Numbers

Alvena Hall's Babbage Textiles

Garry Benson

Charles Babbage (1791-1871) was one of the most restless intellects of his age. It was an age of Industrial Revolution, typified by intellectual giants. Babbage was a notable example.

Babbage is widely acknowledged as the father of the computer and his life was one of unremitting pursuit of this dream. He had a brilliant scientific career yet a tawdry private life.

He was born in Devon. His life spans the change from the rural life of Georgian Britain to the soot, smoke and flames of the Industrial Revolution; the shift from craft to manufacture and from individual skills to machine skills.

Computers are a legacy of Charles Babbage. He was the first to realise that if a machine could be built to remember numbers and simple arithmetic processes, it could be programmed to carry out complex calculations. It is the work of Charles Babbage and his loves that is the centrepiece of the exhibition The Babbage Textiles, by Alvena Hall of South Australia.

Alvena has produced a show that covers the visual history of an age. *The Age of Babbage*, the creator of the computer and his private Eve, the Countess of Lovelace. To quote Alvena Hall:

'This exhibition is about the remarkable collaboration between a crusty mathematician named Charles Babbage, and a young and beautiful aristocratic lady, Ada Lovelace. With their lives and their work, the computer age was born.'

Babbage was educated at Trinity Cambridge. He had a vast range of interests, when he went to Cambridge in 1810, he knew more about mathematics than his tutors. He helped to found the Analytical Society and the Ghost Club ('To prove, one way or another, the existence of the supernatural'). He was awarded his MA in 1817, and produced a total of 80 papers and books over the next 54 years, papers on logarithms, submarines, skeleton keys, actuarial tables for life insurance, postal systems, codes and ciphers, light patterns for lighthouses, the growth rings of trees and their effect on weather, psychedelic lighting effects with coloured lamps and many more.

It was astronomy that introduced him to the concept of computers. Babbage (scion of the Steam Age) commented:

'I wish to God these calculations had been executed by steam!'

His co-worker, John Herschel (later to be Astronomer Royal) said:

'It is quite possible . . .'

In 1882, Babbage started work on his mechanical *Difference Engine*. He was unemployed, with a wife and eight children. After building a model of the device, he wrote two papers on the application of machinery to the computation of mechanical tables published by the Astronomical Society. This led to recognition of his theories by the Royal Society, and the eventual award from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to grant funds for '. . . a full size machine to compute and check tables to twenty places of decimals'.

The biggest problem with the *Difference Engine* however, was that it had no memory, an essential part of every modern-day computer system.

In 1827, after four years hard slog, he went to Italy to recuperate. Whilst the break provided Babbage with new ideas, his absence had disastrous results. During that period a series of projects (such as Brunel's new tunnel under the Thames) had caught public fervour and imagination. Funding was drying up and wages were unpaid.

Twelve months later, Babbage conceived *The Analytical Engine*. It was to be more powerful, more rapid and simpler in construction. For the next eight years he tried to get an official decision from the Treasury as to whether to continue with his *Difference Engine* or proceed with the new one. At last, in 1842, the government abandoned the project. It had cost some £17,000, the equivalent of nearly $2,000,000 at today's prices. Nothing had eventuated, apart from an elegant fragment of the *Difference Engine* that today sits in solitary splendour in the Museum of Science in London.

The New Analytical Engine was a different matter. It handled computations of up to 50 digits and included many of the features of the modern computer. The 'programs' were controlled by punched card (similar to the Jacquard Loom) and the results printed automatically.

It is here that Alvena Hall takes up Babbage's life in her textiles. Using techniques such as cyanotypes, Vandyke printing, photographic stencils, dyeing, quilting, padding and superb stitchery, she has created a panoramic history of the Victorian Age and two of its more infamous characters Charles Babbage and Ada Byron, Countess of Lovelace.

Alvena says: 'The tale is the stuff legends are made of. There are the rich and the famous, grand occasions, blazing rows, personal tragedies, and great journeys in the world and the intellect. There are folios of masterful engineering drawings, piles of manuscripts and reams of fascinating letters, but all dominated by the magic of Babbage's calculating engines. Minor characters on the edge of the drama include Lord Byron, Charles Dickens, Lord Melbourne, the Duke of Wellington, Peel and Brunell'.

Babbage met Ada Byron in 1834, and the cause was a naked Silver Lady who danced.

Babbage bought his dancing Silver Lady from a deceased estate. It was one of a pair of wind-up clockwork sculptures able to perform the most elaborate sequence of movements. Alvena Hall tells the story.

'Some aspects of the tale appeal very strongly to me. Babbage, as a child, was fascinated by two silver automata. Much later, about the time he met Ada (he was 43, she 17), he had acquired one of these, repaired its intricate clockwork, and his dancing Silver Lady was a star turn at his famous parties. But the lovely Ada was more impressed by the brassy clockwork of the Difference Engine *in the next room.'*

Ada (Lady Lovelace) Byron played an important part in Babbage's work. Although Ada's education had been perfunctory and disjointed it was a true scientific collaboration. She had a penchant for languages, music (she played the harp and violin), and mathematics.

Babbage's meeting with Ada in 1834 was also the year his funding went sour. It mattered little to the man, he was enthralled with the greater vision of his *Analytical Engine,* the true and powerful computer. For the next ten years this remarkable woman used her influence to win support for Babbage. She worked on understanding, then promoting his machine. Ada was the first computer programmer, as she set up a programme for the *Analytical Engine.* She has now been honoured by a new computer language called ADA. Her love of mathematics was matched by her love of life, as Alvena Hall discloses.

'Babbage discovered the lectures he had given in Italy had been written and published in 1842 by the military engineer Menabrea, who was later to become the Prime Minister of Italy. Ada agreed to translate this paper, but soon found considerable explanatory notes were in order. Her Translator's Notes became the most important, indeed the only comprehensive treatise, on Babbage's work. Her notes included, in fact, what amounted to the first computer programme. She understood very well the capacities and the limitations of the Babbage invention.'

The Babbage project now needed money and a series of madcap schemes were devised. They included a tick-tack-toe machine; a theatrical production; a novel; a chess-playing machine (rejected as too difficult); and a gambling device for horse racing. With her husband, Count Lovelace, and Babbage, Ada invented an 'infallible' system for beating the bookies. Babbage and the Count stopped in time, but the Countess lost heavily.

At this time, Ada became very ill. Her mother, Lady Byron, not only banned Babbage from the house, but threw out Lord Lovelace and took over the household and the care of Ada's three children. Lady Byron could see her daughter was dying, but she tried to stop her taking opium to relieve the pain. After her death Ada was buried next to Lord Byron, the father she never knew. The financial mess and bitter family disputes left Babbage bereft. His 'fairy lady', who so well understood his work, was gone and Lady Byron's animosity had alienated him from Lord Lovelace. It was a sorry mess.

Babbage then retreated into a lonely old-age, working on his engines and died in October, 1871, two months short of his 80th birthday. His fantastic achievements were ignored by an uncaring and contemporary public.

Seventy-five years later, the British journal **Nature,** describing the 1946 Harvard Mk I computer headlined the article:

Babbage's Dream Comes True

It commented, 'The black mark earned by the British Government of the day more than a hundred years ago for its failure to see Charles Babbage's *Difference Engine* brought to a successful conclusion has still to be wiped out'.

Garry Benson is a well-known tapestry weaver and writer who also speaks science.

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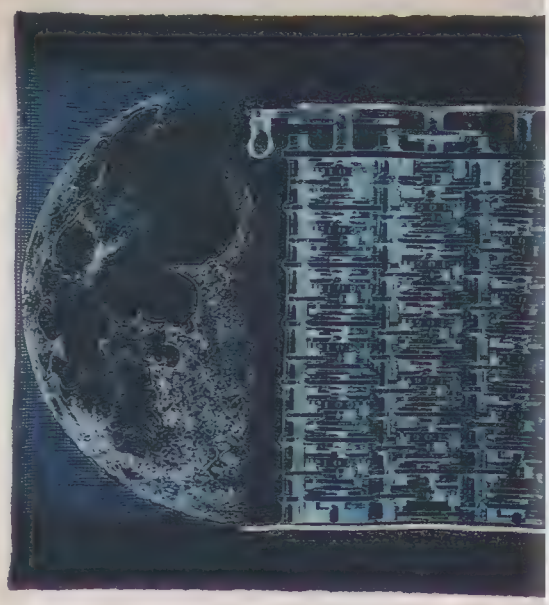

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Bytes. Works in cynotype, Vandyke printing, dyes and stitchery each 450mm square.

1. *Byte 16*
2. *Byte 8*
3. *Byte 15*

Random Access Memories (RAM) Cynotype dyed and quilted (each 650mm x 750mm)

4. *RAM III*

5. *RAM II*

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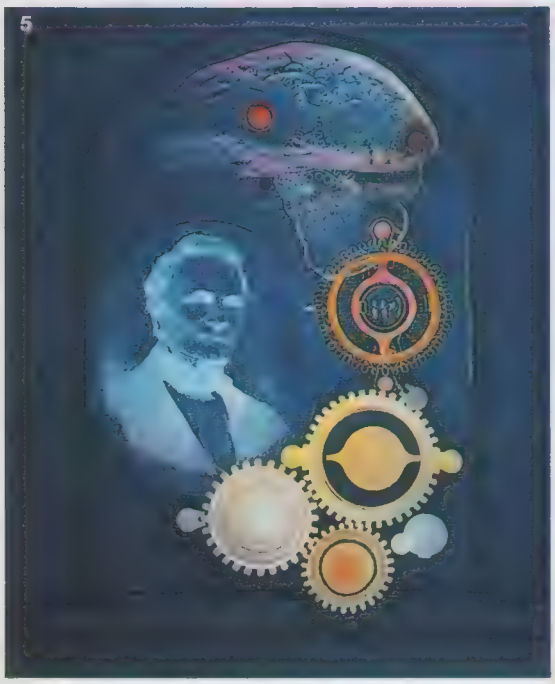
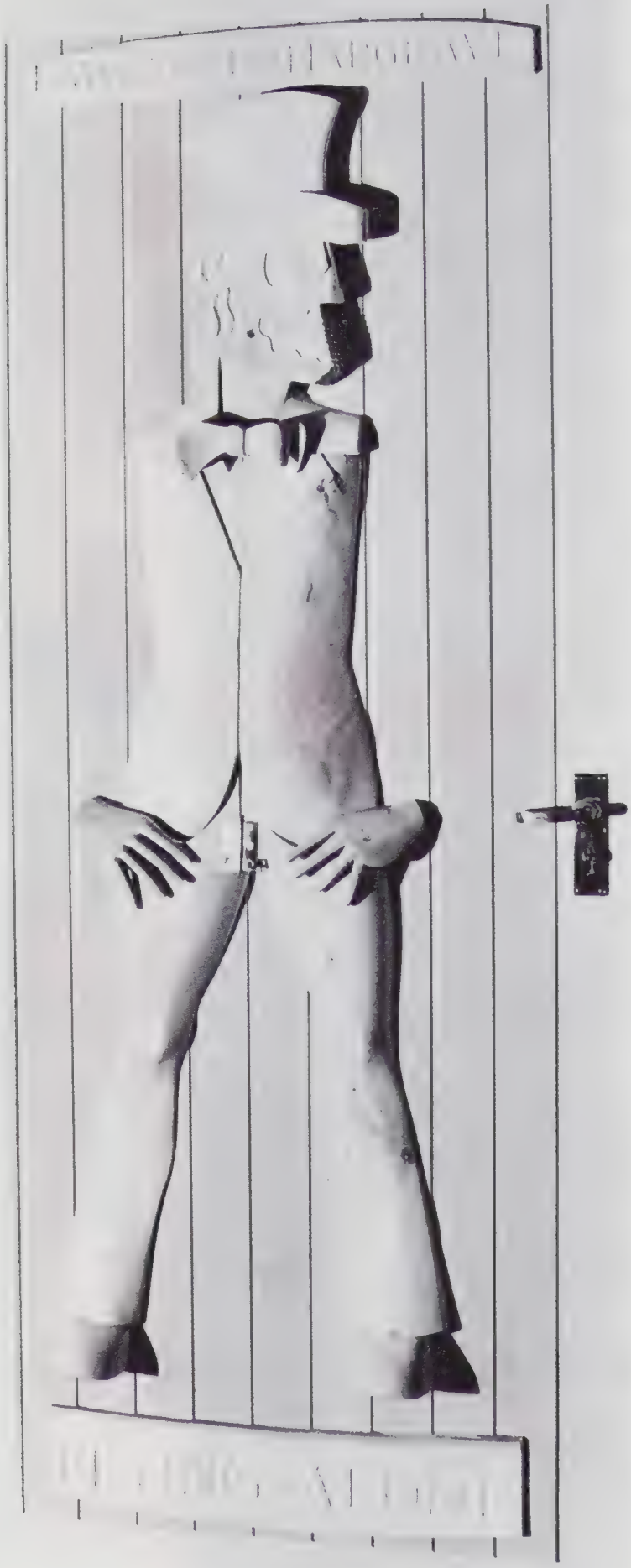


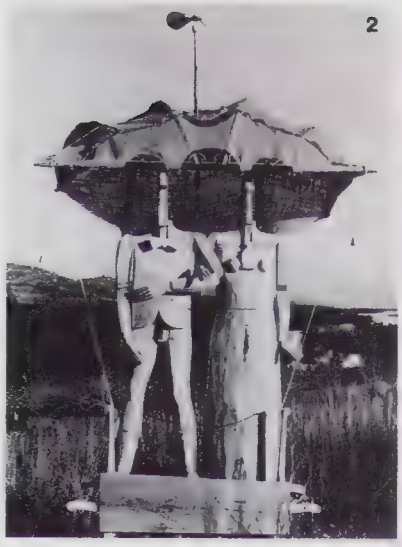
6. *Matrix 1.* 12 Bytes assembled on cotton canvas, soft hung.

7. *Matrix 2.* 12 Bytes assembled on cotton canvas, soft hung.

Photos Eric Algra

1 Front view.





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The Hargrave Door that led to an Opera

Jill Sykes

Nigel Butterley's opera began with a door. No ordinary door. It has a large-as-life sculptured figure passing, like Superman or Mighty Mouse, through its golden slabs of Huon pine. An inscription proclaims: Lawrence Hargrave Flying Alone.

Butterley came upon this curious piece of artistic fantasy in an exhibition selected by Frank Watters, whose fascinating and forward-looking taste in art has inspired some of the composer's most adventurous art purchases over the past 20 years or so.

The door was made by the Tasmanian sculptor, Peter Taylor. It haunted Butterley after he left the exhibition. And it now leads into the tiny upstairs sunroom where he likes to work.

But it is far more than an unusual means of access between one room and another; more than an art work that is useful as well as witty, perceptive and stylishly executed. It is responsible for shaping his composing career.

Its presence in his house prompted Butterley to look into the life of Lawrence Hargrave, the man whose head appears on Australia's $20 note, a man of vision and principle whose belief in the potential of the powered flying machine was far ahead of his time.

Both the character of the man and the circumstances of his life suggested themes of operatic proportion to Butterley. Myer Fredman, head of the NSW Conservatorium's Opera School, commissioned the concept as a Bicentennial project and the Australia Council has provided its largest annual music fellowship of $30,000 to enable Butterley to take next year off from teaching and start the project, as well as finishing a piano concerto commissioned for Roger Woodward.

Hargrave has already been used as an operatic subject. The Melbourne composer Barry Conyngham had the same idea and the premiere of his opera, **Fly**, was held last August in a production by the Victoria State Opera.

Butterley is not at all concerned about the coincidence. Not only did each composer discover his starting point independently, but their approaches are quite different.

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1. Peter Taylor. *Lawrence Hargrave.*
2. Peter Taylor. *Mr & Mrs Hargrave Standing Flying.* 1979. Art Gallery of S.A. Photo Jon McMichael, Hobart.
3. *Nigel Butterly and Lawrence Hargrave.* Photo by courtesy of John Fairfax and Sons Ltd. Photo by Gary McLean.
4. Peter Taylor. *Morning at Stanwell Park.* 1978. Deakin University. Photo Uffe Schultz, Hobart.
5. *Flying Alone.* 1979. Collection of Nigel Butterly. Photo Jon McMichael, Hobart.

5 Rear view.

'My opera has been in the offing for about three years,' says Butterley. 'James McDonald, who's doing the libretto is up to the third draft already. We had worked out a concept before I saw Barry's libretto and I was so glad to see how different it was.

'His is a realistic opera, whereas mine will be surrealistic. I always thought that if I wrote an opera I'd want it to be a fantastic one. Peter Taylor, the sculptor, saw Hargrave as an Australian myth figure because he had these visions of flying, but hardly got off the ground himself. He shows him transcending physical things by flying through the door.

'I see Hargrave as a symbol of a visionary in an unsympathetic society. He is interesting as a subject for an opera because of his vision, his frustration and his fulfilment.

'He had a lot of correspondence with other aviation pioneers and he always shared his ideas. He didn't patent them. He saw the aeroplane as an instrument of peace, something that should be developed for the good of mankind. This made its use in World War I seem all the more terrible to him.

'He had theories about the early discoveries of Australia. Near his house in Woollahra, there were carvings on the rocks which he said were done by Spaniards. He got Norman Lindsay interested in them, so he is one of the characters in the opera.'

Butterley's research, based largely on W. Hudson Shaw's biography, is turning up all kinds of information. He discovered Hargrave had an uncle who died in mysterious circumstances in Hong Kong. And his house in Stanwell Park, an area that is still a centre for flying enthusiasts with its high cliffs and sea breezes powering the hang-gliders of the eighties, was sold after his death with a covenant precluding its use as a memorial to him.

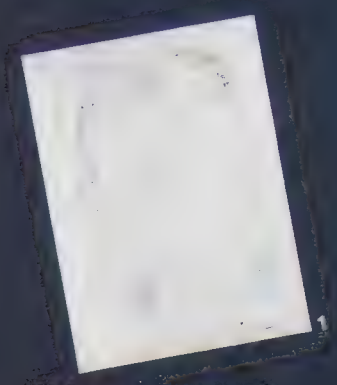
Jill Sykes is a well-established writer on music for the *Sydney Morning Herald.*

Picasso's Ceramics

The very popular Picasso exhibition that travelled to Melbourne and Sydney last year outlined all the major styles and themes of the artist's career except one — Picasso's ceramics.

In this feature, Marilyn McCully places the ceramics in proper historic context and reveals how responsive Picasso was to his immediate environment. The ceramics illustrated here were exhibited last year at the Nicola Jacobs Gallery in London and come from Picasso's personal collection, later inherited by his grandson.

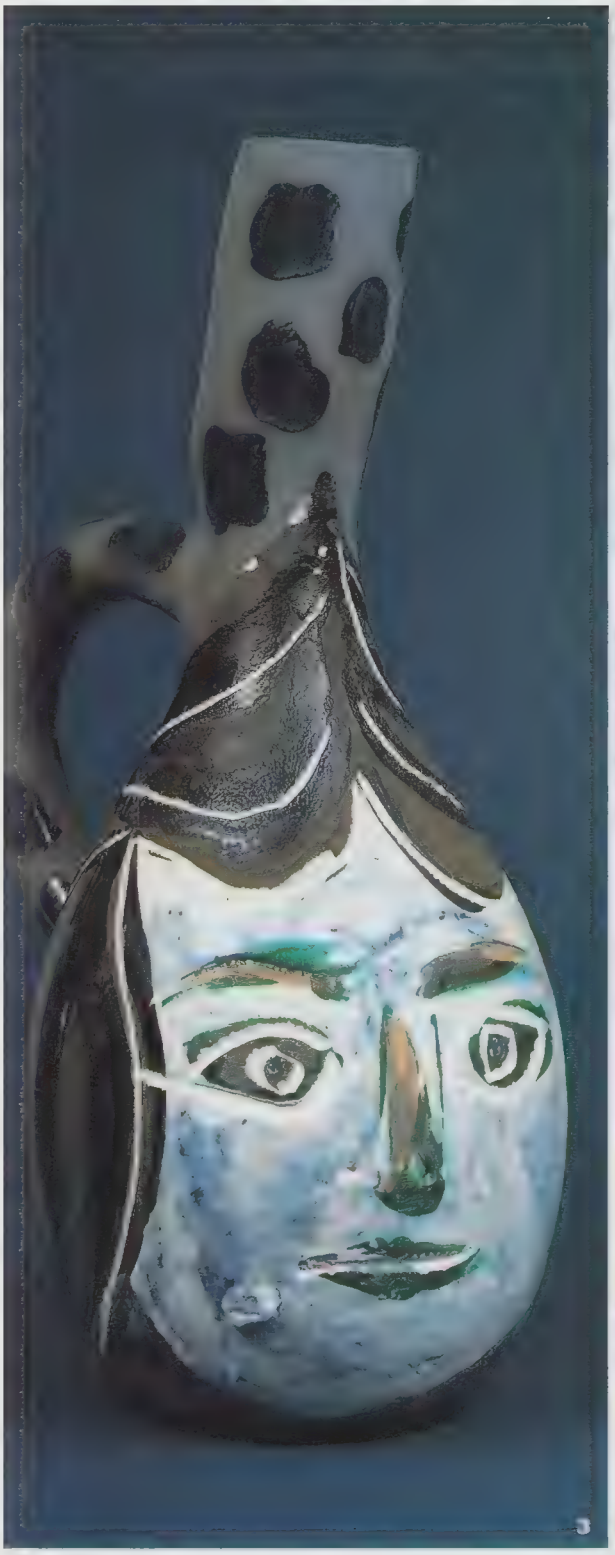
A catalogue of the exhibition is available and some of these works are for sale. For further information, please contact ***Craft Australia***.



Picasso's Ceramics: Transformations

Marilyn McCully

Picasso's ceramics are usually set apart from his main body of work and are treated as less important, because at first glance they seem to represent a somewhat frivolous exercise in the decoration of ordinary objects. Plates, jugs and vases, many of which were not even made (thrown or moulded) by Picasso but by potters at the Madoura pottery in Vallauris, are reshaped or painted, gouged out, scratched or marked by fingerprints and, for the most part, are rendered useless; at the same time, because of their strong associations with popular materials and shapes, they are still hard to explain as more conventional works of art. Yet it is precisely within this ambiguous, often humorous, state that we discover that for Picasso, ceramics not only offered him the challenge of new materials and working methods but also an opportunity to work within an ancient Mediterranean tradition in a highly personal way. In turning to craft, Picasso works with a great deal of liberation, experimenting with the play between decoration and form, two and three-dimensions, and



1. *Sculptor with cup, crouching model.* 21 March 1933. Etching 26.7 x 19.4 cm. Collection: Australian National Gallery Canberra, A.C.T.

2. *Vase-Femme avec Bras Formant Anse et Cercle.* Undated. Unique ceramic. 36 x 18.5 cm. Courtesy Nicola Jacobs Gallery, London.

3. *Visage de Femme.* Executed 4 August 1951. Unique ceramic. 50 x 27 cms. Collection: Sir Richard Attenborough. Courtesy Nicola Jacobs Gallery, London.

4. *Visage et Personnage.* Tall vase. Unique ceramic. 37 x 12 cm. Courtesy Nicola Jacobs Gallery, London.

between personal and universal meaning. Ambiguity itself is thus often the key to understanding.

Picasso's initial interest in ceramics coincides with a new period in his life, marked by a mood of greater optimism and a move to the south of France with Françoise Gilot. During the war years Picasso had remained in Paris, and the interiors, still-lifes and troubled portraits of Dora Maar reflected his isolation and his response to the conflict around him. By contrast, in the south, his subjects and, in the case of ceramics, the medium and the forms themselves celebrate Mediterranean tradition and light, as mythological characters, especially nature deities: fauns and satyrs play out their lively escapades on the surfaces of canvases as well as pots. The region itself, the land of Greek *Antipolis* (Antibes) and Roman *Vallauris* (valley of gold), certainly stimulated the return of mythological subject matter in Picasso's work, which included the paintings, such as *Joie de Vivre*, and drawings done at the *Château Grimaldi* (now the *Musée d'Antibes*) in the summer of 1946. Living here was also a way in which Picasso could return to a place that recalled his youth; for after the war a self-imposed exile prevented him from returning to his native Spain. The coast near Antibes and the hills must have brought back childhood memories of Malaga, a Phoenician city as ancient as any of the Greek colonies on the coast of Provence. The joy in his works of this period reflects not only the warmth and light of new surroundings experienced in the company of a young mistress, but also a sense of rebirth in its traditions.

According to both Sabartés and Gilot (*Picasso a Vallauris,* **Cahiers d'Art** 1:1948 p.82) while she and Picasso were living at Golfe-Juan in 1946, the idea to visit the Ramies' Madoura pottery in Vallauris resulted from a casual suggestion and Picasso's first efforts were simply plate decorations and basic experiments with the new medium. It was during the following summer in 1947 that Picasso began to work at the Ramies in earnest (he reportedly made some two thousand pieces in one year alone), (**L'Oeuvre de**

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5. *Danseurs et Scene Tauromachique*. Small double vase in terracotta. Executed 17 March 1957. Unique ceramic. 22 x 28 cm. Courtesy Nicola Jacobs Gallery, London.

6. *Tête de Torero*. Long plate. 21 October 1947. Unique ceramic. 32 x 38 cm. Collection: Sir Richard Attenborough. Courtesy Nicola Jacobs Gallery, London.

Picasso a Antibes, *Musée d'Antibes* 1981 p.105), at the same time he was finishing work on the *Ulysses and the Sirens* triptych for the *Château Grimaldi*. Picasso's experiments in glazes and finishes were first made with the assistance of Madoura technicians and a local chemist at the *l'Hospied* chemical works in Golfe-Juan; from their instructions he quickly departed and began to develop his own approach.

Picasso's first major series made at the Madoura pottery was the decoration of standard (approximately 38 x 32 cm) press-moulded, earthenware plates. Rather than treating these heavy oblong forms as flat planes simply to replace canvases, he employs the shapes themselves and the inherent qualities of the clay to transform them into paintings with real three-dimensional aspects; in this way they recall his synthetic cubist works of over thirty years before, which often fluctuate between two and three dimensions. In *Visage de Femme* for example, the turquoise border which corresponds to the outer edge of the actual plate defines a face, either of woman or a faun, and drips of colour at the edges also suggest hair and possibly horns at the top. Experiments with materials (here the turquoise is probably borax with copper and the iridescent flesh tone vanadium) and their action on the surface which gives texture, transform the simple plate into a face; yet the object has not altogether lost the association of its function, because of the artist's respect for its form.

In another plate of roughly the same dimensions, *Tête de Torero*, not only does the plate serve as the plane upon which the bullfighter's head is drawn (by actually incising the clay) and painted, but its shape is itself treated as an echo of the bullring. Picasso suggests *sol y sombra* (the light and shadow of the afternoon bullfight) by painting a shadow (using a red slip) along the lower rim and depicts the shimmering colours of the bullfighter's *traje de luces* (suit of lights) or the multi-coloured presence of the crowd along the upper rim with dots of colour (employing different oxides). These painterly dots, reminiscent of a pointillist effect (and his own painted absinthe glasses of 1914), are then humorously echoed in the actual dots of the bullfighter's cap, impressions made perhaps by the end of a brush handle directly into the clay. The transparent glaze that covers the centre of the plate is not uniformly applied, and in an untouched area at the left, the material itself (white clay) actually suggests the real sunlit sand of the bullring.

Gilot also reports that Picasso, dissatisfied with most of the potter's standard shapes, set about to redesign the forms of some of the vessels using the shape of the amphora as his point of departure. A work of a few years later, *Visage de Femme*, a large jug which sculpturally is also a woman's head, is certainly a piece thrown and shaped by Picasso that follows this principle. The transformation of the pot into a head has its sources in the anthropomorphic and zoomorphic pots and other utensils of the ancient Near East and Mediterranean cultures as well as in

popular ceramics. The fifth-century Attic heads of women and negroes which are also vessels, for example, although small in scale, are compelling objects which Picasso would have seen both in the Louvre and in museums in Provence. In more recent pottery, similar transformations occur: in Guadix (near Granada) for example, water vessels are made in the shape of roosters, a motif Picasso himself used on occasion as a reminder of Spain in his work.

In Picasso's hands the idea of transformation takes on new meaning because of his inventive use of materials and forms and because of the visual play he produces between painting and sculpture. In the *Visage de Femme* the bulbous lower portion of the jug is also the oval shape of the woman's head, and Picasso draws and paints a face almost as if he were stretching a mask around that curve. He incises the main features directly into the unglazed white clay and using various oxides (such as copper for the green) and transparent glazes, he paints her with a watery blue for the skin and broad strokes of colour to model and highlight her features. By putting her face on the side of the jug opposite the handle and spout, he uses the neck of the vessel to suggest a head-dress, which recalls the highfronted combs worn by Spanish women with mantillas. Moreover, the patterning of blue patches on the neck and handle made by brushing a transparent glaze over the heavily oxided cobalt slip, enhances the contrast between the overall matt blue-grey finish of these parts of the jug and the glossy hair, so that they can be read as a different object, the comb.

The idea of transformation or metamorphosis that Picasso brings to ceramics is again connected with his interest in the classical world. After his visit to Italy in 1917 and his association with Cocteau and the *Ballets Russes*, references to classical myths begin to appear in his work. These range from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (he illustrates a *Nessus and Dejanira* in 1920 and a complete *Metamorphoses* series in 1930) to the Pompeian *Pipes of Pan*, 1923, and the frequent appearance in the 1930s of the minotaur. This creature, part man part bull, which represents the darker nature forces of classical antiquity, was the subject of Picasso's cover design for the first number of the surrealist magazine **Minotaure**, which appeared in May 1933. The idea of creatures or objects with a dual nature was fundamental for the Surrealists, and they saw their ambiguity as eliciting disturbing or repressed psychological or sexual associations. For Picasso their duality was in many ways an analogy to a more fundamental quality of his art, where, beginning with synthetic Cubism, two separate aspects of the same object are part of the unified whole. Later, in his sculpture cast from assembled objects such as *Baboon and Young* (made in Vallauris in 1951), this is again an essential aspect of his work, now humorous rather than disturbing, for the head still reads as a toy car. The original nature remains inherent even when the metamorphosis is completed.

In Picasso's pottery the idea that the pot is a sculpture and at the same time a pot, and painting complicates either reading, is a result of the notion of transformation and the desire to produce an art whose power resides in that ambiguity. In this way the ceramics should be seen not only in the context of the post-war period in which they were produced but also as an essential part of his *oeuvre*. Beginning with the techniques, materials and subjects of an ancient art tradition, Picasso used his playful experiments to reinvent forms whose meaning resides in the mystery of their making.

Marilyn McCully is a Picasso scholar and is currently preparing a biography on Picasso. She taught at the University of Queensland in 1984.

This article first appeared in the catalogue *Picasso, Original Ceramics* from the Nicola Jacobs Gallery, London, 1984.

7. *Décor Feuilles*. Vase with terracotta handle. Undated. Unique ceramic. 58 x 32 cm. Courtesy Nicola Jacobs Gallery, London.

8. *I Danseur & Un Musicien*. Plate. Executed 28 February 1957. 32 cm diameter. Courtesy Nicola Jacobs Gallery, London.

The Evolving Japanese Kimono

The kimono is firmly enmeshed in Japanese tradition yet each generation approaches the garment with new design ideas and techniques. This feature examines this phenomenon by comparing the modern work of Kubota Itchiku, one of Japan's most exciting kimono designers, with some selected 19th century woodcut prints. The woodcuts are supplied by the Josef Lebovic Gallery, Paddington, from a tasteful exhibition of 35 woodcuts of kimono designs held late last year.

The work of Kubota Itchiku is taken from the book **Opulence** by Tomoyuki Yamanobe. **Opulence** is available through Harper & Row (Australasia) at $39.95.

1. Kubota Itchiku. *Noh I. Kosode*. Silk woven with gold thread. *Shibori*, free-hand drawing and gold-foil imprint.

2. Kubota Itchiku.

3. Kubota Itchiku. *Rings on the Water. Kosode*. Silk crepe, *Sibori* and free-hand drawing.

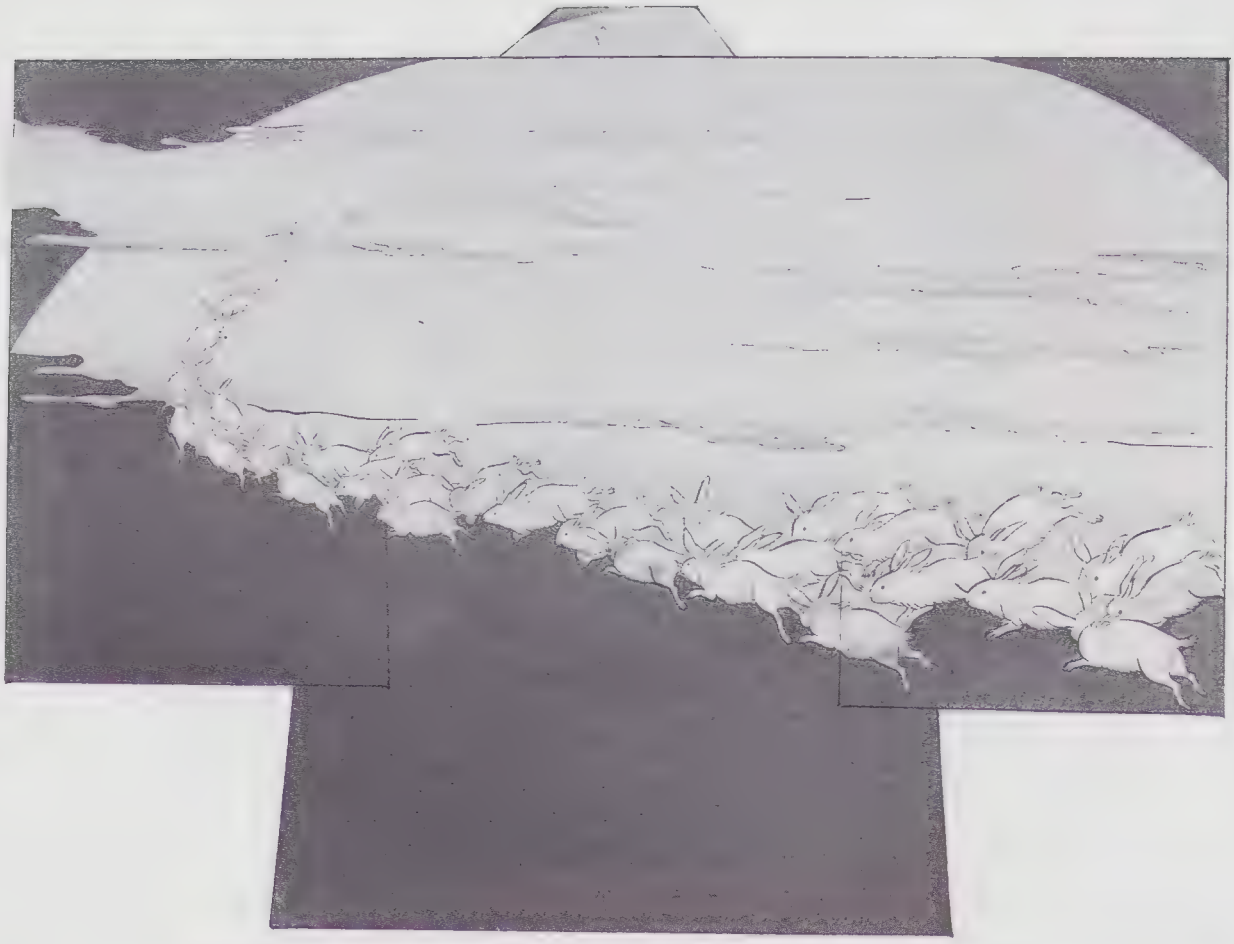
4. Kubota Itchiku. *Paulownia flowers. Furisode*. Silk woven with gold thread, *Shibori* and free-hand drawing.

Some Personal Reflections on Kubota Itchiku

Tomoyuki Yamanobe

Among Kubota Itchiku's most recent pieces is a series titled *Symphony of Light in Five Kimono* (1981). Subtitled *Crimson, Flame Red, Cinnamon Tan, Bamboo Green,* and *Sky Gray,* their sumptuousness is overpowering. It is almost as if the kimono have been transformed into canvas to create a painting brimming with opulent colors.

Symphony of Light is a major work which sums up the development, to date, of Itchiku's dye technique called *Itchiku Tsujigahana. Tsujigahana* is the term used to describe sixteenth century garments dyed with patterns shaped by *nuishime shibori* (stitched tie dye) and outlined or highlighted with ink, gold, and



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5. 19th C. Kimono. *Moon Rabbits.* 25.0 x 36.3 cm. A column of rabbits running across the sky to the heavens. The Japanese believe the rabbit's home is in the moon. (Joanne Cahill).
6. 19th C. Kimono. *The Colour of Flowers.* 25.0 x 36.3 cm. A Japanese poem in the top right and the image of a skeleton holding what appears to be a mirror. The poem:
The floral lustre
in sooth away has faded
while, looking idly on,
my days I've let go wilting,
like flowers in long rains with'ring.
Ono-no-Komachi.
The female poet *Ono-no-Komachi* wrote in the 9th century A.D. (Joanne Cahill).

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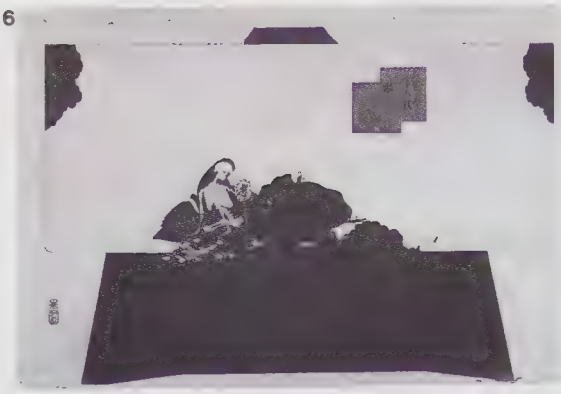

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embroidery. By the end of the century, the exquisite images of *tsujigahana* had vanished into a phantom art.

Four hundred years have elapsed since then. There must be many who wonder where in Itchiku's work one can find the vestiges of these classic pieces. Has he, as some may believe, simply used the term *tsujigahana,* a term echoing of past splendor, to enhance what is really his own invention? I believe this is true. In fact, there is no doubt that Itchiku has developed his own original style of dyeing. To expect the old, unaltered form of *tsujigahana* to appear in his pieces is to expect, as an old Japanese proverb goes, "to find fish among the trees." There is, after all, the interval of four centuries between today and the demise of *tsujigahana.*

To close this gap and revive *tsujigahana* in a modern context two approaches are possible. The first is to leap over this gap and deal directly with the original *tsujigahana,* of which fortunately there are numerous extant examples, and to duplicate it without destroying the original form. This would, in effect, be turning back to the past.

The second, conversely, is to bring *tsujigahana* up to the present times, to fill this gap by building on the old foundations with materials, techniques, and motifs not found in the classic pieces.

For something as resplendent as *tsujigahana* once was, the best path would seem to be to revive it in as close a form as possible to the original, preserving as much of the flavor and the techniques as one could. But is this really possible? A copy is, after all, a copy, an imitation. The very magnificence of the original may well foredoom the result to a bad replica, regardless of how much effort is put into pursuing the phantom.

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Anyone who sees *Symphony of Light* will agree that Itchiku chose the second path. He incorporates into his pieces not only the techniques of outlining and *nuishime shibori* found in real *tsujigahana,* but also designs, concepts, and colour combinations from later periods.

After *tsujigahana* vanished at the end of the sixteenth century, the trend in kimono design was towards creating large overall images which were conceptualized as a composite picture stretching over the entire surface of the kimono spread flat (as can be seen in this book). In the Kanbun *kosode* popular during the seventeenth century, the design is concentrated on one side of the kimono. The other side is left as a broad, empty expanse, just as in *sumi* ink paintings (*sumi-e*) where large unpainted portions, expressing the depth of the sky and the vastness of the ocean, intensify the patterned portion by balancing it with its opposite. The ground holds the pattern up, sharpening and defining it.

In the eighteenth century, a new dye technique based on paste resist applied freehand appeared. It was called *yūzen. Yūzen* kimono displayed a combination of gorgeous colors and intricate drawing. The ground as well was often done in brilliant hues which deepened the impression of a receding background.

The large designs and lavish colors of *yuzen,* and the minute *shibori* patterns defined with *sumi* ink of *tsujigahana* also appear in *Itchiku Tsujigahana,* together creating yet a new exquisiteness. Itchiku has gone one step further, however. In this kimono, both the ground and the pattern work as the upper elements of the design. Fused into the surface, integrated into a single harmony, they create an image — a painting, as it were — of unparalleled beauty.

Itchiku is unbound by the restrictions of one tradition or the other. He uses what best suits his purposes. This is very clear in his choice of materials. In the sixteenth century, *tsujigahana* were made mostly on thin, plain weave silk. In the Edo period (1615-1867) the Japanese turned to figured silks, having learned to weave for themselves the Chinese satins and damasks they had earlier imported. These came to be used for *kosode* and later became the highest quality of cloth and were used for the garments of lords of rank. They are still used extensively today.

For many of his pieces Itchiku selected a thick *chirimen* crepe. With *chirimen* he is able to heighten the effect of the wrinkles created in the *shibori* process and to intensify the impact of his colors and patterns. As can be seen in *Symphony of Light*, Itchiku even selected fabrics previously used only for *obi* sashes, which have metallic thread woven into them and are thick and stiff. The gold and silver glows through the dyed color, lending the cloth a dazzling brilliance and subtle shadowing which melts away the ground and pattern and erases the distinction between the two to create a painting on kimono of palpable eloquence. This special handling of fabric is intrinsic to Itchiku's painterly vision.

Itchiku's art moves forward ceaselessly. Recently he dyed a sequel to *Symphony of Light in Five Kimono* to make it a *Symphony in Ten.* These five new pieces are Reproduced here [**OPULENCE**] there is no indication that this will be the end. As with classic *tsujigahana,* each new piece by Itchiku becomes another step in a progression of unending metamorphosis. The beautiful phantom flower of classic *tsujigahana* dances in Itchiku's artistic vision where it has been reborn in the modern world with a breathtaking brilliance.

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7. Two 19th C. kimono with traditional mask of old man. *NOH-costume.* 36.3 x 25.0 cm. Pine sprigs with vine leaves amongst mist. These kimono were probably designed for NOH-theatre. (Joanne Cahill).

8. 19th C. Kimono. *Sveno Matsuzaka,* hill in front of Mt Fuji. 36.3 x 25.0 cm. Probably a wedding kimono worn by the mother without the obi (sash). The pine trees symbolise good luck and long life. (Joanne Cahill).

9. 19th C. Kimono detail. *Proliferating Sparrows.* 36.3 x 25.0 cm. *Tsubame* technique. This detail is from a formal furisode, a long-sleeved kimono worn by young girls. (Joanne Cahill).

10. 19th C. Kimono detail. *Chrysanthemum Garden.* 36.3 x 25.0 cm. *Kikuno Sono* technique. (Joanne Cahill).

11. 19th C. Kimono detail. *Bamboo and Sparrows.* 36.3 x 25.0 cm. *Take to Suzume* technique. (Joanne Cahill).

Hoechst

Detail: Douglas McManus 1984 Award-winning screen printed textiles.

TEXTILE AWARD

Applications for the 1986 National Hoechst Textile Award are invited from artists/craftspersons working in the fields of Batik, Embroidery, Screen Printed Textiles or Weaving.

The award will cover all workshop fees, free use of all workshop equipment and selected materials, to a maximum value of $2,000 at the Access Textile Workshop, Meat Market Craft Centre. The award also provides for a subsidy of $3,000 as a contribution towards living expenses. This subsidy to be paid to the successful applicant, in equal monthly instalments for the duration of their residency, by the Meat Market Craft Centre. Preference will be given to an emerging rather than a well established craft person.

The award winner will be chosen in September each year and the residency will be for a period of not less than nine months, to be defined for the following year.

Conditions of Award

Applicants are required to have been resident in Australia for two years prior to taking up the award.

Applicants may be from any State or Territory within Australia.

A finished work, produced during the residency, is to be presented to Hoechst Australia Limited for their textile collection.

Application forms and stipulated enclosures must be received at the Meat Market Craft Centre no later than 6th September, 1985.

Further information and application forms for the award may be obtained from:

Robert Vallis
Meat Market Craft Centre
42 Courtney Street
North Melbourne 3051
Telephone: (03) 329 9966

TAMWORTH FIBRE COLLECTION 1975-84

Julie Montgarrett 'Nothing but Memory, Place & Desire' (Detail) Purchased 1984.

TRAVELLING EXHIBITION

Venues

7th June — 10th July
Goulburn Regional Art Gallery

22th July — 18th August
Crafts Council Gallery, Canberra

23rd August — 24th September
Albury Regional Art Gallery

TAMWORTH CITY ART GALLERY

V. GUY KABLE BUILDING
203 MARIUS STREET,
TAMWORTH 2340
(067) 66 2280

THIS EXHIBITION IS ASSISTED BY THE CRAFTS BOARD OF THE AUSTRALIA COUNCIL.

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Paper in Three Dimensions

Nola Anderson

Judy Silver's work refuses to fit into one nicely formulated 1980s trend. There are no clarion calls of neo-expressionism or figurative revival, and the fit is even less possible if one resorts to the Great Craft Revival Theory. That's good. It makes you think a lot harder about the work when there is no handy tag.

What can be identified in Judy Silver's work is the individualist attitude to medium and object surfacing in a variety of ways. This pluralism within the visual arts is well recognized and is one way of saying there's a lot going on. New definitions will soon be found to sustain what Lucy Lippard in her **Changing: Essays in Art Criticism** described as art history's 'eternal rectitude'.

For the moment though, the work itself must be sufficient. Ian Were's *Helmets for WW IV*, Dianne Fogwell's furniture (as fanciful as her works on paper), David Green's fibreworks, Margaret Ainscow's paper and Judy Silver's work, to cite a few examples, are products of a sophisticated confidence that asserts medium as tool, not tradition. Their work can match that philosophy with an intense personal vision born of contemporary experience.

That's not to say that these artists are frantically casting about for fads with which to pay *hommage* to the god Amazing Newness. Judy Silver's work is extremely coherent in its own development and intentions. The works in her most recent exhibition 'Paperworks and Constructions', at the Arts Council Gallery in Canberra in association with Gallery Huntley (August/September 1984), used explorations in Judy's previous work as the launching pad for new work.

In 1981, Silver was working with moulded paper. At that stage the work was made from a single mould and the composition was based on a formal interrelationship of simple geometric shapes. The configurations tended to be static and the colour clear and simplified, with a decorative over-patterning contained by and defining the forms. The paper edge was irregular but clearly perceived.

Cast-paper I and others of the series, came from that period. The mood is one of restraint and there is some friction between the push towards three-dimensional intention and the static geometrical configuration.

These were followed in 1982 by such works as *City Grill*, the *Red Mark*, *Guardian*, the *Calliope* series and the *Hobart* series. These have direct descendants in the 1984 *Hobart Revisited* series.

1. *Hobart Series No. II* 20 × 23.5 cms. Paper pulp, collage. 1982.

2. Judy Silver. 1985. Photo David Reid.

3. *Cascade*. 155 × 80 × 36 cms. Acrylic on Foamcore. 1984. Photo David Reid.

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In these 1982 works, her geometric configurations exploded into vigorous assemblages of emblems and pattern. The shift in mood from restraint to exuberance is remarkable and is matched by a sophisticated energy that relies more on the ironies of random accretion than juxtaposed geometry. Colours are more complex, though they still define the work's structure, and they have yet to be subjected to the intensification and economy of the *Hobart* series. The free use of bold patterning, still used here to accent individual forms, the see-through composition and the edge as an incidental process are clues that point towards issues raised in later works.

With the change to the paper pulp collage technique in the 1982 *Hobart* series, Silver's gestures achieved considerable freedom. It gave her the chance to combine drawing with the fascination of three-dimensional medium and a range of intense colours. Compared to the earlier geometric pieces, these works are now confident enough to permit some anarchy, in the knowledge that such expression will bring its own equilibrium.

From here it is a sure step to the *Hobart Revisited* series and her other paper pulp and collage pieces of the Canberra show, with their more complex overpatterning and, in some such as *Crosscut* and *Landform*, a return to a more controlled organisation of flat areas. Both approaches work well, although I thought where less structure is imposed, the more attention is given to the beauty of the uncoaxed line. The work is vibrant, energetic and is a mature resolution of previous themes.

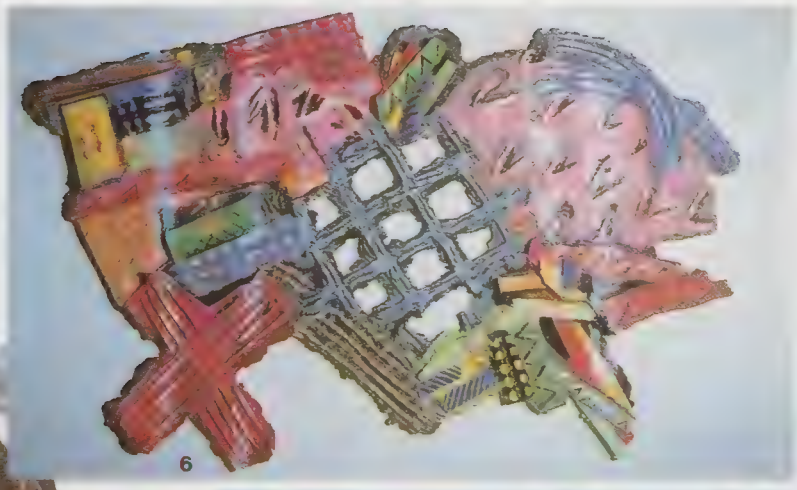
. . . A sophisticated confidence that asserts medium as tool, not tradition . . .

The discussion up to this point would suggest that Silver's work developed with singular intention from one idea to the next. An evaluation of her work, however, is not so much a process of neat logic as tracing all the clues in retrospect. The *Calliope* series of 1982, three of which were included in the 1984 Canberra show, took more steps along the way towards an investigation of the illusions of form, but at the time they seemed somewhat isolated from the major concerns of the cast paper and paper pulp works. The clues point to what was to become, in the 1984 work, an exploration of visual semantics: when is an edge not an edge, where does a form begin and end, how can patterning confuse the issues? These ideas were taken up in the *Hobart Revisited* series and, more explicitly, in the new three-dimensional constructions.

The constructions were focal points within a space that was much more substantial than the space they physically occupied and that they would, in some way, manipulate. The sheer energetic presence of *From Cliffs to Sea*, with its staccato rhythms falling over themselves, commanded attention from some distance. Its placement, directly opposite the gallery entrance, was a master touch in accommodating the processional movement towards it that it seemed to deserve.

The three-dimensional pieces functioned in two perspectives: the wide-angle and the close-up, the play on visual messages created by the painted surface and protruding forms. It should be noted that *From Cliffs to Sea* was the most dramatic example of the wide-angle perspective, while other works were more content to hug the wall. The smaller constructions replaced drama with intricacy.

Once you're there, what happens close up? There is an invitation to poke around, the rear and underneath of the protrusions are all painted. This is the point where you start solving what is edge, what is shadow, what is trick and what is real. *Cascade* is a particularly good playground for this with its intricate maze of angles and surfaces. Its complex density implies an



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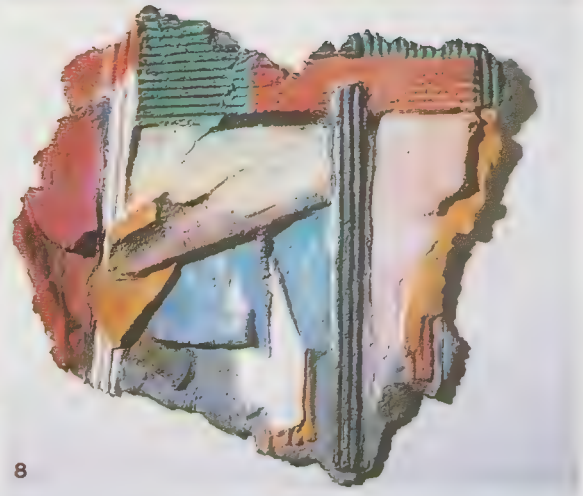

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4. *Crosscut*. 76 × 121 cms. Paper pulp, collage. 1984.

5. *From Cliffs to Sea*. 250 × 200 × 150 cms. Acrylic on Foamcore. Photo David Reid.

6. *City Grill*. 97 × 150 cms. Cast paper, acrylic and cloth. 1982.

7. *Landform*. 67 × 69 cms. Paper pulp, collage. 1984.

8. *Cast Paper No. I*. 43 × 43 cms. Acrylic on paper. 1981.

9. *Hobart Revisited No. 15*. 30 × 43 cms. Paper pulp, collage. 1984.

inner structure that draws the thrusting shapes together.

Despite the painterly texture and obviously 'constructed' mass, the puzzles in Silver's work are set in terms of visual language, not a textural one. This is an interesting comment on her use, or non-use of message through material that is emphasized in much work done in 'alternative' mediums. The solutions come a bit harder when the material plays a back stage role.

Her smaller constructions have a beautiful precious intricacy created by their rhythm of small shapes and detailed surface patterning which confuses the visual message and at the same time maintains a delight in its own attractions.

At the end of this discussion I am still no closer to slotting Judy Silver into a nice niche. So much the better, because that gives the artist another small head start on the conscientious classifiers.

Nola Anderson is a well-known Crafts journalist and critic.

Nouveau Baroque in Metal

Robyn Clarke

Melbourne jeweller Ian Ferguson is still less than one year out from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology where he took a diploma in fine arts, gold and silversmithing. He has had just one major exhibition so far. Yet he has achieved more notice than many jewellers practising their craft for more than a decade.

He entered RMIT as a mature student. He is already 38 and when he took up gold and silversmithing, he had many years of architectural drafting behind him, with all the design that entails.

In August 1984 he was appointed technical manager of the Access Metal Workshop at Melbourne's Meat Market Craft Centre. This is not a teaching position. It would be hardly fair to him or students to expect someone still mastering their craft to take on that sort of responsibility. He will administer the workshop, make sure that proper use of the facilities is made and that the people working have a reasonable level of proficiency.

Craft Australia spoke to him before his took up this post. He estimated that the job would mean spending about 40 hours a week at the Meat Market. He would be paid for about 20 hours a week, but throughout the week he would have full use of the workshop's facilities.

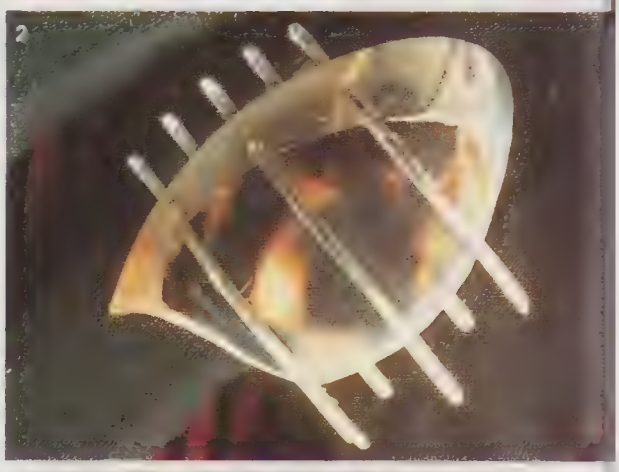
The Meat Market job is just one major step on Ian Ferguson's horizon. He also plans to develop his craft through overseas study. As we spoke he was preparing his applications.

'The Meat Market post is only for one year. After that finishes, I think I've got to see what I can learn overseas. I'm applying for admittance to two centres in London, the Royal College of the Arts and the Camberwell School of Arts. And I'm trying also for the Glasgow School of Art. Further off in the future, I'd like to study for some time in Germany; I'd have to master the language first.'

'Great Britain and Germany are, I feel, the real centres of creative gold and silversmithing today. It's in those countries that the real developments in modern jewellery are being made. The *avant-garde* work being shown in London now is just amazing.'

Ian went into jewellery after 18 years in architectural drafting. 'That's a dead end really. I could have gone on and studied and got a diploma in architecture. But being an architect nowadays is very much like entering a business. It gives you little scope for creativity. I've always been interested in jewellery. So seven years ago I started going to Collingwood Technical College for three hours once a week. I persevered there for three years but the limitations were too great. Really, those three years were just wasted.'

'So I decided instead to go to RMIT. I took a deep breath and just plunged in. I had trouble enrolling because of my age. They wanted me to attend only part-time and do a six-year part-time course. That wasn't what I wanted, so I just barged my way in and started attending every class. I was going full-time whether they liked it or not. Finally, they gave me the full-time place of someone who had dropped out along the way. Now of course they're finding that mature-age students generally get on better than others anyway . . . '



1. *Spoon Set*. 160mm × 25mm wide. Sterling silver. 1984. Photo R. Muggleton.
2. *Sea Ring 3*. 45mm × 25mm × 28mm. Sterling silver, 9ct gold, tortoise shell. 1983. Photo R. Muggleton.
3. *Sea Ring 2*. 55mm × 28mm × 30mm. Sterling silver, 14ct gold, *Niello* inlay, titanium. 1983. Photo R. Muggleton.
4. *Coffee Pot*. 205mm high × 95mm dia. Sterling silver and African walnut. 1983. Photo I. Ferguson and H. Forster.
5. *Sea Ring 4*. 150mm × 35mm × 30mm. Sterling silver (oxidised), 18ct gold, stainless steel, carnelian. 1983. Photo R. Muggleton.
6. *Spinning Tops*. 100mm high × 65mm dia. Sterling silver, copper, brass, titanium, citrines, moonstones, cubit zirconiums, lead crystal, Tasmanian blackwood. 1984. Photo R. Muggleton.

His work was first seen publicly at the *Makers Mark* fine jewellery gallery in Collins Street, Melbourne, one of the few local galleries that makes an effort to exhibit and promote the best of our gold and silversmiths. Alongside recognised names, the gallery has always been ready to showcase worthy emerging talent. 'I was already to have had some works shown in the *Crafts Australia Easter Show* at the *Meat Market* and (Melbourne jeweller) Felicity Dalgleish wanted someone to go in exhibition with her at *Makers Mark*. All of a sudden my hands were full.'

I reviewed the show favourably in ***The Age*** at the time, but the show otherwise had a quiet reception. Only three pieces of Ian Ferguson's work were sold. 'I think the time of the year may have had some bearing', said Ian. 'It was getting on towards the end of the financial year. Most people wanted to hold onto what cash they had. But also, this country does not give *any* fine gold and silversmith the respect and attention it gives an artist. I'm not just talking about myself. The best established jewellers suffer the same way. It's our cultural heritage, that's all.'

'The biggest problem is that people are, by and large, afraid of their own taste. People are afraid of backing their own judgement unless it's ratified by the media or presented for sale in a prestige location like *George's*. There are far more people who are prepared to be adventurous with art. With jewellery, it's got to be approved. Safe and tried.'

At the *Makers Mark* exhibition, Ian Ferguson's imaginative pieces, especially the four sea-rings and

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the ornate fantasy-inspired spinning tops, showed assured use of materials and evidenced promising future developments as he gains further experience and confidence.

The strong points of the exhibition were his more functional objects. His splendidly noble silver coffee pot; the elegant spoons that, as in the ball-ended spoons showed exquisite proportions and simplicity in a modern baroque style.

His coffee pot is aesthetic yet ruggedly individual, with a spirited character that sets it far away from the similarly styled Scandinavian models. There is a cheeky element to his design. There is a subtle reference here to the days of 19th Century steam locomotion. Quizzed on this, Ian Ferguson calls the pot his baroque machine. The coffee pot is the first part of an intended set. The cream jug and sugar bowl are still to come. He will have to wait for more positive sales success before committing himself to the expense of tackling those.

This modern baroque feeling also carries through to the spoons. Pure elegance can be beautiful but cold. The slight baroque feeling gives these precious sterling silver spoons their stylised but intensely human feeling.

This functional ware is the area in which Ian Ferguson's architectural experience comes to the fore. The pieces are stamped with an assured sense of design and finish, balance and proportion. His technical prowess and design skill find perfect meeting ground in these pieces.

1-2. J. W. R. Linton. *Necklace and Pendant.* Private collection.

3. J. W. R. Linton. *Serving Spoon* with floral motif. J. A. B. (Jamie) Linton. *Serving Spoon* with woman in handle. Sterling silver. Private collection. Photo Geoff Lovell.

4. J. W. R. Linton. *Serving Spoons.* Sterling silver. 1930. Western Australian Museum.

James W. R. Linton

Anne Gray

James W. R. Linton (1869-1947) was the guiding force behind the craft movement in Western Australia for many years. During this time, the majority of artists-craftspeople in Western Australia were either his pupils or colleagues.

The son of Sir James Dromgole Linton, an academic watercolourist, Linton was educated at the Slade School of Fine Art from 1885 to 1888 and later at the Westminster School of Art in Britain. In 1896 his father sent him to Western Australia to investigate a failed mining investment and although he frequently considered returning to England, he remained in Perth the rest of his life, apart from short visits away.

5-6. J. W. R. Linton. *Necklace and Pendant.* Private collection.

7-8. J. W. R. Linton. *Necklace and Pendant.* Ruby, opal, silver, gold. c.1914. Private collection.

9. J. W. R. Linton. *Corner Cupboard with Carved Panel.* Jarrah. Western Australian Museum.

10. J. W. R. Linton. *Tooled leather bookcover.* Western Australian Museum.

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Western Australian Crafts Leader

Principally a watercolourist, Linton was drawn to applied art because as an art master at the Perth Technical School (from 1902 to 1932), he was required to teach decorative art and hence to be sufficiently accomplished in the various crafts he taught. Further, while living on a limited income in an isolated community and in order to meet his taste for sound design and solid workmanship, he found it desirable to make his own furniture and fittings.

In 1904, commenting about his teaching in the **Western Mail** (23.7.1904) Linton remarked: *'Painting is absolutely a luxury, and we can't get away from the fact. But with our homes here, we have a necessity in the way of art, as applied to furnishing, and the demand for art in this direction must be evident to anyone who walks down Hay Street. If you look into*

11. J. W. R. Linton. *Tooled leather chairback.* Western Australian Museum.

12. J. W. R. Linton. *Tooled leather.* Western Australian Museum.

13. J. W. R. Linton. *Tooled leather chairback.* Western Australian Museum.

1-2. J. A. B. (Jamie) Linton. *Necklace and Pendant.* Opal, silver, gold. Private collection.

3. J. A. B. (Jamie) Linton. *Necklace and Pendant.* Opal, silver. Private collection.

4. J. A. B. (Jamie) Linton. *Set of 6 Sherbet Dishes.* Silver. 11.5 x 8.9 cms. c.1935. Australian National Gallery.

5. J. A. B. (Jamie) Linton, designer. Made by John Linton (grandson). *Claret Jug.* Sterling silver. Private collection. Photo Geoff Lovell.

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the shop windows, you will see door-plates, finger-plates, door-handles, electric light brackets and other articles too numerous to mention, that show some beautiful efforts of the designer's art, and also, I think, an assured demand in such works for the handiwork of a local art craftsman. Most of these pieces of furniture are made in most realistic imitation of handwork, the smallest hammer marks, and the oxidation of the metal in its process of working, being faithfully imitated. I feel sure that locally, they would take the handmade work preferably to the imitation work that is struck on a die; and I think it is possible for a local craftsman to execute work at reasonable prices. I desire to see this practical side of art encouraged, and pushed on as much as possible.'

Well-designed furniture and hand-crafted objects were not easy to find in Western Australia at the turn of the century and so, Linton's interest in making these had a firm pragmatic basis. Some of his students discovered a way of earning their living as a result of their instruction in applied art, while others learned how to make much desired items which they could not otherwise have obtained or afforded.

Linton's first craft commission came in 1901 when he designed a casket to be presented to the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York during their visit to Western Australia. Like much of Linton's later woodwork this was made from local timbers and embellished with carved motifs based on Western Australian flora and fauna. Surviving examples of Linton's woodwork suggest that he had ability in this

6. J. A. B. (Jamie) Linton. *Fork. Cake Slice.* Sterling silver cast and beaten. L. 14.0 cms. 1955. Art Gallery of WA.

7. J. A. B. (Jamie) Linton. *Fruit Spoon. Icecream Spoon.* Sterling silver cast and raised. L. 15.2 cms. 1955. Art Gallery of WA.

8. J. A. B. (Jamie) Linton. *Set of 6 Teaspoons.* Sterling silver raised and cast. L. 11.4 cms. 1955. Art Gallery of WA.

9 J. A. B. (Jamie) Linton, designer. Made by John Linton (grandson). *Sweet Spoons and Serving Spoon* with red bugle wildflower motif. Sterling silver. Private collection. Photo Geoff Lovell.

10. J. A. B. (Jamie) Linton. *Earrings.* Gold and silver (granulated). Private collection. Photo Geoff Lovell.

11. Julius A. Paskauskas. *Yarra Carvings.* Julius was an American who visited Australia during the 1939-45 war. He married an Australian woman and worked with J. A. B. (Jamie) Linton in the late 1940s and early 50s. He died c.1964-65. Photo Geoff Lovell.

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1. John Linton (grandson). *Teapot.* Sterling silver. Private collection. Photo Geoff Lovell.
2. John Linton (Grandson). *Silver chalice.* Private collection.

medium. The woodwork was mostly necessary, work-a-day furniture for his home or presents for friends, and includes stools, chairs, tables, cradles, beds, dressers and cabinets.

In this aspect of his work Linton owed particular debt to his father, Sir James linton, and to the British arts and crafts movement. Like William Morris, Linton was interested in uniting beauty and taste with practicality and durability and in achieving sound workmanship along the lines of old artisans. His designs were governed by the timber he used and by the function of the object. He had a preference for robust English designs of the Tudor and Jacobean periods because jarrah, which he used, was short grained and best suited to the bolder forms.

In using local timber for his woodwork Linton was working in the Morris tradition, but he was also following the example of the first teacher of wood carving at the Perth Technical School, William Howitt, who was active in encouraging the use of Western Australian timber for local craftwork. Linton, in turn, passed on this recommendation to his students.

Linton's initial craftwork was experimental and exploratory. He had no formal training in applied art and much of his initial work evolved through trial and error. He received some assistance from London, from friends of his father such as the Art Workers' Guild member Alexander Fisher (who influenced many artists involved in the enamelling revival at the turn of the century). His earlier metalwork, before his visit to England in 1907-1908, was mostly in copper and brass: copper plates, bowls, beakers and jugs, and iron door-panels. Nonetheless, by 1905, he was confident of his achievements and had plans to give up teaching for full-time work as a craftsman.

During his visit to England in 1907-1908, he studied metalwork, enamelling, jewellery and bronze casting at the Sir John Cass Technical Institute under Harold Stabler. He also visited various metal and wood carving studios in London, including Alexander Fisher's enamelling studio. This gave him ideas for the layout of his studio in Perth.

The twenty years immediately following Linton's visit to England were his most productive especially as a silversmith. During this period he enjoyed fruitful partnerships with Arthur Cross (1910-1917), with his own son, Jamie (J. A. B. Linton) (c. 1921-1925 and after 1927), and with William Andrews (mid-1920s). In his first joint exhibition with Arthur Cross in 1910, 63 items were displayed, over half were jewellery. The reviewer for the **West Australian** commented on the show: 'the exhibitors . . . J. W. R. Linton and A. G. Cross . . . pride themselves in being the first artists in Western Australia to place before the public a collection of art and craft. The display becomes all the more remarkable and interesting to the onlooker when he remembers that every article he sees before him has been made locally, and from the raw material . . . and all are of original design . . . Specially attractive . . . are a number of brooches, necklaces, earrings, bangles, and so forth.'

This was followed by a second joint exhibition in 1913. From 1921 Linton's partner was his elder son, Jamie (1904-1980). Following studies with his father as a silversmith, Jamie went to London in 1926 to attend the Central School of Arts and Crafts and subsequently to the *Academie Julian* in Paris. On his return to Perth two years later, Jamie recommenced work with his father. Their silverware included sugar basins and bowls, teaspoons, serving spoons and butter knives, and was often decorated with abstract twists and interlacings of wire together with Western Australian motifs. Linton's work was more abstract than Jamie's and was characteristically simple and spare in design; Jamie's was more representational and sculptural. Linton enjoyed experimenting with his materials, the object's utility taking second place to its artistry; while Jamie, a full-time silversmith, was more alert to function and new technologies.

The tradition Linton established in Western Australia at the turn of the century is carried on today by his grandson, John Linton, and Jamie's son-in-law, George Lucas, as well as by one of Linton's former pupils, Kitch Currie. During his lifetime Linton influenced other Western Australian silversmiths such as William Andrews and Gordon Holdsworth, as well as the potter Flora Landells and the furniture maker Harold England. But even more pervasive was Linton's influence over many unknown amateurs Linton encouraged to make hand-crafted objects for their own homes and who, through his teaching, developed an appreciation of good design and an understanding of some of the ideals of the British arts and crafts movement.

Anne Gray is a curator of art at the Australian War Memorial. Her book on J.W.R. Linton will be released this year by the Fremantle Arts Centre Press.

1. *Ladysea and Desert.* Ladysea is the female ocean, the long trailing wave. On the other side, the rough textured burnt orange male desert.

2. *Ebony and Ivory.* This is named after the song 'Ebony and Ivory'.

3. *Moscow.* This knit shows the oriental influence and the richness of the Tsarist times.

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Hanni Stupp A Needling Art

Trich Williams

Because she wears her dazzling wearable art with so much ease, flair and zest, it seems essential to describe Hanni Stupp, the person, in concert with Hanni (Hannelore) Stupp, the artist. Her art is so obviously a translation of herself, her body, her Piscean fantasies, the two cannot, in the mind's eye, be separated.

She looks deceptively small but is, in fact, 1.70m with silky blonde hair and perpetually honey-brown skin, a perfect coathanger for her own work. Loaded with nervous energy, she is like a rare, many-hued bird as she darts, almost flies from one room to another, gesticulating, showing, explaining, trying on her individual creations, pullovers, capes, skirts and accessories for arms, legs, head and neck, her gift being that she knows how to put them together and wear them with superb nonchalance, originality and fun. What does she call her work? 'I don't know really but does 'Pictures in Fibres' sound right?'

4

'Six years ago, in my thirties, I started working seriously in my present medium, this talent was a sleeping one, before that I painted a bit and sewed furiously for family and friends. There is only so much you can do with a technique and what you can do with a brush you can't do with needles. My technique is fairly simple, kept to the basics, I'm not into fancy stitching. I'm more interested in the structure and meaning as a whole, more interested in giving each piece I create a life of its own.' This year she had her first exhibition at **EXPO '84** and at the Hogarth Gallery in Sydney.

She works in a diminutive courtyard house, the courtyard filled with pot plants, hanging baskets, sculpture and sundry cats. The house is filled with flowers, enormous palms, assorted sentimentalia, marvellous miscellany and bits of lovely nonsense from everywhere. There are nine exotic, erotic, Schiaparelli-pink silk cushions on one minute sofa, a heavily beaded hat on an extraordinary lamp, a brass buddha, three love-goddesses and an immense cupboard oozing with the brilliant 'hundreds 'n' thousands', 'licorice-all-sorts' materials necessary for her work, all of this is put together with oddly charming juxtapositioning and an inherent, idiosyncratic love and eye for beauty. She brings light, life and vitality into what otherwise would be a dreary little place; she brings the same inspiration into her imaginative art. 'I have to have beauty around me when I work,' she says and makes sure that she has it.

'I've been in Australia since 1967. I was born in Dresden, brought up in style with nurses, chauffeurs and all the storybook trappings but my parents, my mother was Swedish, my father German, lost their fortune during the war. I understand and appreciate richness and lavishness and although my life is very different now, I think these things are evident in my craft. I wonder sometimes if it is too rich, too flamboyant for Australians who seem scared of colour. I love rich colours, rich textures, elaborate design, I am myself flamboyant.' Her work is romantic, lyrical, dramatic, often cheeky, it has an intrinsic, organic, growing quality and significance.

'Most of what I do is spontaneous. I have only a vague idea until I get a feeling for the piece and the fabric of what it is going to be like. I work non-stop, to music, mostly to my friend Nicholas Lyon's, sometimes to Mozart. The music and my mood control the colours I use. Colours and music are all important to me, my children first, then those two things. My work involves knitting, crochet, beading, embroidery, a whole needlecraft. I've had no formal training, no art school; my grandmother taught me to knit, the rest was self-taught.' She does not like to be called a knitter. 'What I do has little to do with the customary concept of knitting.' She is flattered and amused by the sketchbook-copying brigade and wishes them luck. She works in a combination of threads: wools, cottons, silks, adding beads, pearls, gold and silver threads and hand-dyed ribbons. The materials are expensive, the work labour intensive and clearly a labour of love. 'I can't think about hours worked. I'll never be wealthy but I have to eat. We are living in a time when people are looking for LABELS (Hers is a modest hand-embroidered H). I am not into *couture* and high fashion, into what is in this year or next. There are different shapes because the human body has different shapes. That is why I like my fit-anybody capes. They can be simple and rely on colour and texture; they can be extravagant and heavily ornamented; they are versatile and can be used as a skirt, a bedcover or hung on the wall like a tapestry. I'm thinking of specializing in exotic evening 'occasion' capes, something I can put all my creative daring into.'

She wants and aims to go abroad, hopefully to Europe and America, take a look-see, refresh her eyes and her needles but not for long. She needs the sun. 'It is what gives me my energy, improves my disposition, gives my work its vibrancy.' Spring, summer, autumn or winter if you see an energy-plus blonde lugging a Red Riding Hood basket spilling over with wondrous threads, half a cape and a sandwich, that's Hanni Stupp off on one of her frequent pilgrimages to a harbour beach where the sun revitalizes her and the sea music replaces Lyon and Mozart.

Trich Williams is a well-known Sydney journalist specialising in dance.

4. *Butterfly.* The colours are gentle, magical like a butterfly with big wings. There is a skirt and that becomes the butterfly's body.

5. *In Love.* The hearts are self-explanatory, my romanticism again.

6. *Tree of Life.* The tree has a male and a female trunk. It is abundant and ready to pick of its golden fruit.

7. *Judith.* This is made for my friend Judith Consigli, the Adelaide artist who created jewellery, paintings and sculture of great lyrical beauty, who was, with her dramatic good looks, my perfect model and who died so tragically in India recently.

8. *Evergreen.* This is truly romantic, it has little bells and a wedding wish inside the pocket.

Photos Jill Crossley

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Celebration of the Senses

Nobody writes about Australia quite like Eric Rolls. His book on the introduction of foreign fauna and flora *They All Ran Wild* should [illegible] school syllabus and his most recent rural NSW history *A Million Wild Acres* is a love-song to the Australian countryside.

This excerpt is from his book devoted to the senses, the [illegible] on SMELL. Eric Rolls introduces six senses, adding 'feelings'. All [illegible] liberal amounts of feelings. All are highly recommended.

(This excerpt from Eric Rolls' *Celebration of the Senses*, Thomas Nelson Australia, 1984)

Smell

I sit to write on a chair of leather and Australian fluted maple by a craftsman. The rosy grain is [illegible] to look at, the texture delicate to feel. Apart from the obvious senses one [illegible] among a soft perfume, a suggestion of distant roses. Offcuts of the timber have been used in perfume making instead of attar of roses.

Cypress pine flooring enriches a house. Delicate incense rises from the floor. It rises from cypress cladding, too, but usually pine walls are painted. Odour and colour are fossilised in acrylic plastic. I do not like the smell of paint. I do not like the harsh colours.

Burning Dry wood is as fetid as a company of farts. Bushmen have spoilt meals by an unrecognised log of it on the camp fire. We season our winter fires with several timbers. The basis of the fire is box or ironbark. Pine smells good burning but it burns too fast and spits dangerously. It showers red-hot coals a centimetre in diameter four or five metres. Box and ironbark burn hot, burn moderately, and with little ash. Roots and knots vary the flames. They swirl around them, leap, burn calmly, change colour as they encounter different densities of wood. Pockets of gas generate and burst out, hissing needles of flame. Hollow logs suck flames in one end and spurt them out the other. A forked log forks the flames. They issue in different colours at different speeds. And when the log with the hollow, consumed outside and in to a shell, collapses into a mound of light red coals, fuzzy flames move over them like glowing moss.

Occasionally, we put on a log of myall or sandalwood, a root of oak. A gentle incense surrounds the room, adds fragrance to the lingering tang of the dry eucalypt leaves we always throw into the kindling. The room holds the fragrance all summer through. It could belong to no other country.

Gum Leaves Burning

[illegible] roots of box, a hollow ironbark knot
Burn in pastel oranges and blues, brown, green, mauve and black.
The chimney [illegible]s as chimneys ought.

[illegible] and each light
[illegible] spectrum of two hundred years
[illegible]'s night.

The smell hangs light in the room
Of handfuls of dried gum leaves thrown among the kindling:
A certain testimony to an Australian home.

Those leaves give [illegible] to flame
As mountains crumble [illegible] grades of people withered by the hearth.
First fire, last fire [illegible] the same.

[illegible] was unhurried. After the joyful waking we need time to absorb the [illegible] the new day. Haste spoils it. It takes the day for granted. Our time is not static. No seasons repeat themselves. At length lifted sheets release the smell of semen and the several female juices no one has named. The two smells are distinct but complementary. I make the fire in the closed box of the slow-combustion stove. It crackles out the sharp smell of pine chips. I cut bread thickly and toast it in a pre-heated toaster that takes thick slices. It smells crisp. Steam from the teapot promises the flavour of broad-leaved Darjeeling tea. Outside dew drips from the grass to ground and catalyses the deep odours of soil. Open the windows a little wider. The early day sounds rich and smells rich. It will heavily absorb all the senses.

Photo Allen Moult

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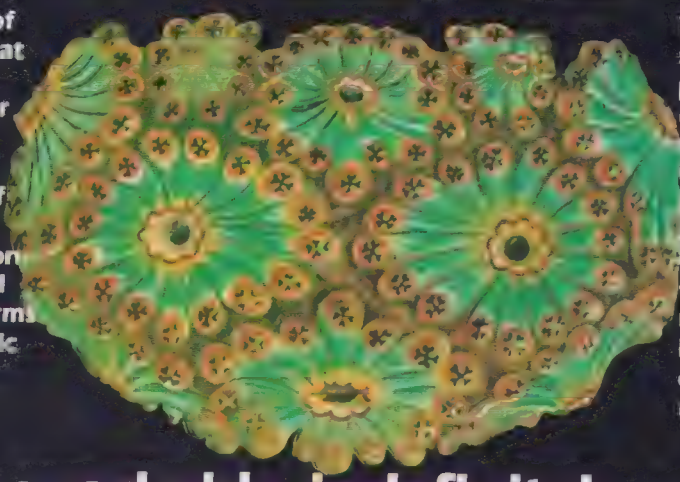

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Restoring Elizabeth Farm

II : Colonial Textiles

Susan Hunt

The impact of a historic house's interior is both visual and tactile. The right 'look' is not good enough without the right 'feel'. The creation of a 'feel' that is both convincing and enjoyable is largely dependant on the careful selection and hanging of textiles.

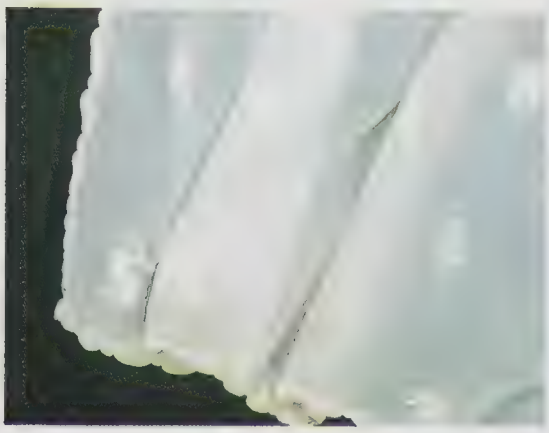
Elizabeth Farm, Parramatta was opened in June 1984 as an historic house museum by the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. The house was built in 1793 by John and Elizabeth Macarthur, some of our first settlers to the colony. Elizabeth Farm is one of the oldest surviving European-style buildings in Australia.

Elizabeth Farm.
Joseph Lycett.
Views in Australia. 1824.
Mitchell Library.

At Elizabeth Farm, the Historic Houses Trust places particular emphasis on the woven and printed fabrics used in the floor coverings, window and bed hangings and other soft furnishings assembled for the restoration of the house.

As an open access museum where visitors can move freely without ropes or barriers, Elizabeth Farm represents a unique experiment among Australian

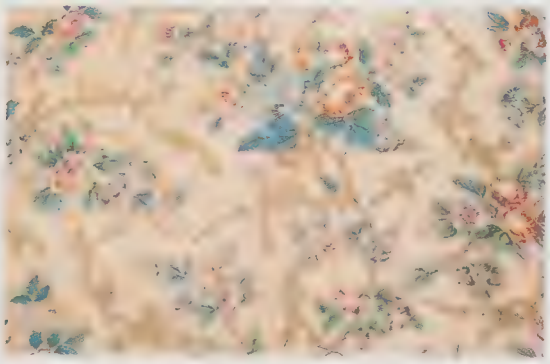
Sprigged voile curtains on French doors in DrawingRoom.



Voile curtain detail.

Pink Bedroom.

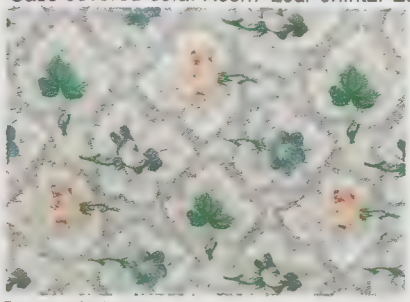
Glazed chintz detail of *Coraux*. c.1835.



Original English chintz. c.1850.

Drawing Room, Elizabeth Farm.

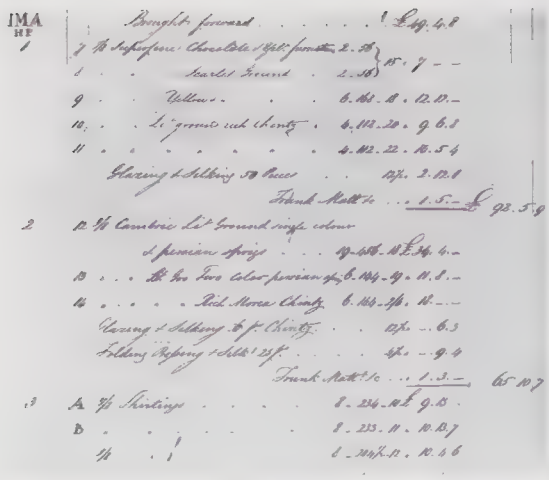
Case-covered sofa. *Acorn Leaf* chintz. Early 19th century.



Detail of chintz on veranda chairs.

Chintz *Fleurs de Mai*. c.1835.
Drawing Room.

Details of the *Roses and Leaves* chintz, c.1850 used in the Dining Room.



Ledger entries by John Macarthur.
Courtesy of the Mitchell Library.

historic house museums. To allow viewers to experience the house more fully, the rooms have been furnished simply, almost abstractly, like a theatre set. Emphasis has been placed on individual pieces of furniture and objects that are known by research and family tradition to have been owned and used by the Macarthur family. Where possible, facsimiles of these pieces have been made and are now on display in the house, but in order to create an historically convincing ambience considerable importance has been placed on the colours and patterns of the textiles and their hanging.

In winter, visitors are encouraged to sit on chairs case-covered in glazed chintz, in front of an open fire reading an 1830s Macarthur family letter. In summer, visitors look through cool, white muslin, floral chintz and sprigged voile curtains onto a wide encircling verandah shaded by bamboo blinds. The settings are simple; sparse in comparison with the interiors of mid-Victorian or grander houses.

Whilst a good deal is known about the furniture at Elizabeth Farm from family history and inventories, the fabrics and soft furnishings are less documented. In John Macarthur's ledger and accounts we find that large quantities of high quality practical fabrics were bought by Macarthur in England. These were sent back to his nephew Hannibal Macarthur in NSW, presumably for resale. Whilst we do not have direct evidence that any of these materials were used at Elizabeth Farm they are important as a reflection of Macarthur's taste and an indication of the type of goods available. Cambrics, chintz, muslins, dimities, *marcella* quilts are all listed. As Elizabeth Farm attempts to interpret the aesthetics of the Macarthur family, this specific documentation, combined with a knowledge of English traditions in the early 19th century provides a basis for the recreation of the interiors at Elizabeth Farm.

It was decided to interpret the interiors with fabrics and designs that ranged through the period of the Macarthurs' occupancy. As Elizabeth Farm was remodelled in 1826, the period of the 1830s to 1850 (when Mrs. Macarthur died) was selected. Care was taken, however, to interpret specific rooms as accurately as possible: John Macarthur's library/bedroom, for example, uses early 1830s fabrics, as John died in 1834. On the other hand, the pink bedroom has 1840s fabrics as its furniture is believed to have been used by Elizabeth Macarthur until her death in 1850. To the 20th century visitor, steeped in modern aesthetics, surrounded by artificial, mass-produced, standardised parts and unadorned surfaces, the concept of 19th century ornamentation, design and craftsmanship is quite alien. Therefore, Elizabeth Farm as a recreation of an early 19th century interior, using accurate materials and methods provides an important contrast to our inherited functional aesthetics. In 1808, in his **Household Furniture**, George Smith listed a hierarchy of materials to be used in an early 19th century interior:

'. . . for Eating Rooms and Libraries a material of more substance is requisite than for Rooms of a lighter cast; and for such purposes superfine cloth or cassimere (both woollen goods) will even be the best; the colours as fancy or taste may direct; yet scarlet and crimson will ever hold the preference . . . calico when used should be of one colour in shades of moroon [sic] and scarlet. In elegant Drawing Rooms, plain coloured satin or figured damask assumes the first rank as well for use as for richness lustring and tababarays [silks]. The next calico, the next in choice and of so great variety of patterns should where good drapery is required be glazed mellow.'

This indicates the appropriateness of particular fabrics and colour for certain rooms in grand houses. At Elizabeth Farm, these are substituted for patterned chintz that Smith further explains were suited to secondary apartments or the house of persons of small fortune but they are not at all suitable for those persons of rank and splendid income. Contemporary encyclopedias and pattern books such as George Smith's (1808) and J. C. Loudon's (1833) are important sources for the selection of accurate textiles at Elizabeth Farm. Other factors are availability and cost of such materials.

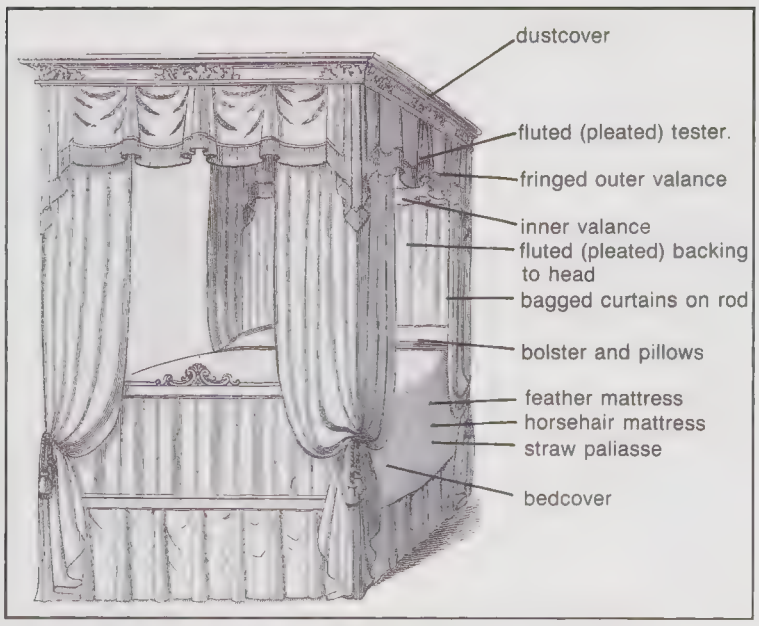
Due to the perishable nature of textiles and the need to preserve what few pieces remain, curators are often left with reproduction fabrics as the most authentic way of creating a period interior. Whilst in traditional museums this is a compromise; at Elizabeth Farm reproduction fabrics are particularly appropriate to an interior setting that consists largely of facsimiles or reproductions. A documentary reproduction fabric is a modern textile that copies, as accurately as possible, an historic original. Many of these original fabrics are housed in large collections in England and Europe. To accurately assess the quality of the reproduction, it is important to have studied some original documents. Australia has few original textile collections due to the harshness of our climate and the lack of continuity of ownership of family collections, as well as the paucity of museums to house and preserve such original fabrics. Britain, however, is very rich in such archive material. As a result, many of the fabrics used at Elizabeth Farm are from Britain or the United States.

When selecting reproduction fabrics, care must be taken to find the documentary colourway. That is, the colour in which the material was originally printed. Commercial reproductions often make available a number of non-documentary colours, which although attractive to contemporary taste, are inappropriate for historical recreations.

The type of designs available is a major difficulty in selecting modern reproduction fabric. Commercial fabrics are largely an indication of today's tastes and fashions. Pretty designs sell better, whilst the less lavish, less attractive designs of the period can quickly go out of production (as is the case with the chintz used on John Macarthur's bed); or are not reproduced at all. As Jane Nylander points out in **Fabrics for Historical Buildings** ready availability of William Morris and Co. designs in the 1880s does not mean that they were the first choice of people in the late 19th century. The search for simple fabrics and designs suitable to a farm house in an unsophisticated English colony, was therefore a difficult one. In most restoration work, but in restoration furnishing in particular, 'ordinariness' is hard to define and achieve.

In an attempt to provide accurate fabrics and interior decoration for Elizabeth Farm, cottons, particularly printed cottons were chosen. James Broadbent, the Curator searched for 'an undemanding fabric, one which sustained interest in the room but not too

Elizabeth Wright.



Drawing of typical 19th Century bed hangings, J.C. Loudon (1833)

sophisticated or greedy of attention'. This quality he found for the drawing room in a French block print called *Fleurs de Mai*, a glazed floral chintz of 100 per cent cotton. This reproduction cloth was made from a c.1835 document now housed at the *Musée des Artes Decoratifs*, Paris.

Chintz is mentioned several times in John Macarthur's ledger and accounts of 1812. Chintz derives from the Hindi word *chint*, meaning variegated or spotted and generally refers to glazed cotton cloth of plain weave. Originally made in India by the process of mordant and resist dyeing, chintz usually had several colours, typically of floral patterns. It was not until the 1670s that the Europeans learnt the secret of the sophisticated Indian dyeing techniques which produced the washable chintz that was so superior to the primitive printed linens of Europe. The Indian dyeing was achieved by marking out the pattern with mordants that fix the dye to the cloth. Originally, these mordants were painted on the cloths by hand. Later they were printed on. For many specialists this application is one of the major distinctions between fine and commonplace Indian chintz. The great advantage for the cotton painter is the freedom to produce imaginative and dynamic designs without the repetition associated with the woodblock printing.

Throughout the 18th and early 19th centuries the production of chintz underwent many changes. The earliest chintz were printed by the woodblock method and this technique continued throughout the 18th century. The chintz used at Elizabeth Farm are reproductions of the block print types or, a combination of block print and roller print.

Whilst most of the modern reproduction fabrics are reproduced by a continuous rotary printer or silk-screen process, the red and green *Roses and Leaves* chintz (c.1850) used in the dining room at Elizabeth Farm has actually been block printed by hand. This was purchased from the English company Ramm, Son and Crocker which has an archive of about 1000 documentary fabrics, mainly 18th century and 19th century. Block printing furnishing fabrics by hand is a slow and expensive process, even more difficult than block printing of wallpapers.

For those visitors who come to Elizabeth Farm and feel the hand blocked green and maroon 'Roses and Leaves' chintz in the dining room, its particular quality is obvious. Block printing creates a soft, imprecise look and a depth of colour is achieved by the fall-on of dye; each layer having time to dry before the next is applied. Modern textiles have a much flatter effect.

Other original block printed reproduction chintz used at Elizabeth Farm are the early 19th century *Acorn Leaf* used in the dining room plant room, the *Blue Coraux* glazed chintz used in the drawing room firescreen and the *Beauchamp* chintz on several of the verandah cane chairs. The *Beauchamp*, a dainty repetitive flower decoration is from Warner and Sons Archive II collection and is taken from a mid 19th century document. This exhibits an interesting stippling design favoured for its effect of giving depth and interest to an otherwise flat design.

The 1820s and '30s were a transition period for chintz due to the technological developments which transformed the industry. Perhaps the most significant invention was that of Thomas Bell's rotary printing machine consisting of engraved metal rollers patented in 1783. It seems from pattern books that machine printing was not widely used on expensive furnishing prints until some time after Bell's invention.

The *Emily* chintz c.1830-1845 used for the bedhanging in the pink bedroom at Elizabeth Farm had originally a woodblock and roller print design. An attractive pink and blue glazed cotton, *Emily* is supplied by Colefax and Fowler. The original document is privately owned in England. These *Emily* chintz bed curtains with white damask linings signal a later period, as previously 'dyed linings', Loudon suggests, 'have now given way to plain white or spotted ones' for easier cleaning.

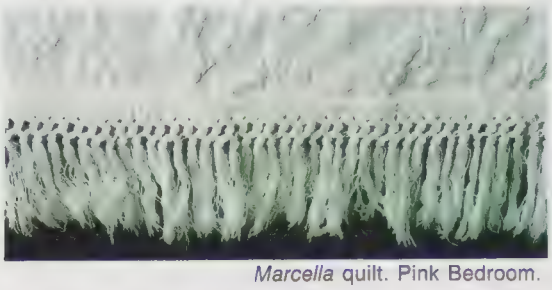
In John Macarthur's library/bedroom an accurate hanging of a 19th century four post double bed has been carefully attempted. The bed's three mattresses are of particular importance: straw *paliasse* first, then horsehair, finally a feather mattress. In the 19th century, Mrs Beeton suggested in her **Book of Household Management** of 1861 that bed making was an art, where the bedclothes are laid on to the mattress;

'beginning with an under blanket and sheet, which are tucked under the mattress at the bottom. The bolster is then beaten and shaken, and put on, the top of the sheet rolled around it, and the sheet then tucked in all round. The pillows and other bedclothes follow, and the counterpane over all, which should fall in graceful folds, and at equal distance from the ground all round. The curtains are drawn to the head and folded neatly across the bed, and the whole finished in a smooth and graceful manner.'

The English *Custom House* chintz (c.1820-30) used for the hanging of John Macarthur's four post double bed was also originally a roller print chintz. The document is owned by the Society for the Preservation of Long

Concertina dimity blind with cotton fringe with sash curtain. Pink Bedroom.

Chintz bedcurtain detail showing damask lining. Pink Bedroom.



Marcella quilt. Pink Bedroom.

Island Antiquities, Setauket N.Y. It is manufactured by Bruschwig and Fils, New York. This striking brown and yellow glazed cotton exhibits a strong affinity with traditional Indian designs. The bed hangings are fringed and lined with yellow glazed cotton. The fringed and scalloped valence, muslin sash curtains on the lower half of the French doors and a heavy green woollen rep weave fabric across the arch establish a striking visual effect.

The use of muslin and voile curtains throughout Elizabeth Farm, together with chintz, bamboo blinds, and cane stools provide evidence of the important cultural link between India, China and Australia. English army officers such as the Australian Lieutenant Governor Francis Grose (governed 1792-95) who had served in India brought with them Anglo-Indian customs and traditions well suited to our climate. The suitability of light muslin curtains; cool, washable and brightly coloured chintz; and shady encircling verandahs to a hot and largely inhospitable environment is evident. The sprigged voile curtains that would have originally been hand-embroidered in India now grace the French window of the drawing room. The voile is edged with fine handworked shell edging.

Apart from the choice of material, the method of working them at Elizabeth Farm is very important. One particularly important 19th century feature is the use of case covers for most of the furniture. **The Workwoman's Guide** of 1840 (London) provides a very good description of the nature and use of case covers.

'When chairs and sofas are fitted up with damask merino stuff, horsehair or other material that does not wash, they are generally covered with Holland, chintz or glazed calico which protects them from dust and dirt . . . '

Whilst the case covers were made by William O'Hehir and Son, the major sewing of Elizabeth Farm's curtains, bedhangings, blinds and tablecloths was carried out by Elizabeth Wright, a talented seamstress now living in Newcastle, NSW. To complete this mammoth project she was assisted by her sister and mother, Merilyn Hey and Glenda Barclay.

John Macarthur's bed. Chintz. c.1830. bed curtains

Elizabeth modestly under-rates her very extraordinary capabilities by insisting that she is merely a 'plain sewer'. Although she has been sewing all her life, Elizabeth's real experience with 19th century fabrics and historic interiors came when she lived at Aberglassyn from 1976-1981. When she and her husband bought this very significant 1840s house near Maitland, it was in need of total restoration. A whole team of artisans lived and experimented with restoration techniques now taken for granted. Living at Aberglassyn, like Elizabeth Farm, designed by the colonial architect John Verge, gave her an appreciation and understanding of the way such a house should be used and lived in. It was in this context that she was faced with the challenge of making some of Aberglassyn's soft furnishings. 'With heaps of patience and commonsense and a sensitivity for 19th century interiors', Elizabeth argues that what she has achieved at Aberglassyn and Elizabeth Farm is within the scope of any woman. She fails to acknowledge how rare these qualities are.

Elizabeth reads a great deal of 19th century literature, particularly Jane Austen and Elizabeth Gaskell. She stresses that this has been a very important

Scalloped valance of John Macarthur's bed.

Gathering and piping on bedcovering.

Bedding detail and detail showing bedcover, bed clothing, feather mattress, horsehair mattress and straw *paliasse*.

ains in DrawingRoom and detail.

Chintz case-covered arm chair in the Drawing Room.

Curtain fragments and fittings, 1840-1900.

background to her knowledge of 19th century fabrics and their uses. For example, several years ago, before she had even seen a piece of dimity, Elizabeth said she instinctively knew how it was used. From the rich description of room settings in 19th century novels, she knew that it was totally inappropriate for a dining room or library and was most often used for bedrooms, as it is in the pink bedroom at Elizabeth Farm.

'It is most important to go back and study as closely as possible contemporary accounts, pictorial and literary as well as surviving textiles,' Elizabeth said. Amateur watercolours, for example, often show a great deal of detail which can be used when trying to make a curtain or bedhanging.

Before starting on Elizabeth Farm's soft furnishings, Elizabeth worked with the Curator, James Broadbent studying authentic early 19th century textile documents. She copied the design and detailing of the dining room curtains from an early 19th century chintz curtain from James Broadbent's own collection. The blinds, particularly the concertina blind in the pink bedroom, were also made after studying surviving documents.

Many features at Elizabeth Farm are very practical and largely based on evidence. John Macarthur's bedroom muslin sash curtains for example were hung at a particular height disregarding the glazing patterns of the doors; not for aesthetic but for practical reasons. Sash curtains or half curtains covered the lower part of the window to screen and filter light.

'When I made the things for Elizabeth Farm, I felt as if I was making them for my own house,' Elizabeth said. Because of her experiences in another Verge house, Elizabeth Farm 'was an extension of something totally familiar' to Elizabeth Wright. Yet she is quick to add that she had to be careful not to impose her own taste upon the house or its interior furnishings. This was a discipline Elizabeth had developed at Aberglassyn.

When asked about the difficulties she encountered in reproducing 19th century sewing techniques, Elizabeth said a great deal of invaluable information about 19th century techniques of mosquito net and cushion making came from her mother, Mrs Welsford. Mrs Welsford lived in India most of her life and came to Australia in 1956, when Elizabeth was 13. Whilst Mrs Welsford had never had to sew in India, she absorbed many traditions by watching Indian servants sewing around her. Her information was particularly valuable as so many of the materials used in making the soft furnishings at Elizabeth Farm, chintz, muslins and voiles, are of Anglo-Indian origin.

Elizabeth strongly advocates both hand-sewing and the use of as many authentic fabrics as possible. 'Even if the machine stitching is not to be seen, the machine sewing affects the way the material looks and hangs'. 'If the fabric is right,' Elizabeth said, 'you will know how to work it.' This, she suggests, comes largely through trial and error and improvisation.

The green woollen rep weave fabric, for example, in the large curtain in John Macarthur's bedroom/library 'doesn't work if one tries to machine it'. 'You must look at the weave and work out what is appropriate to the material,' Elizabeth said. In this case, it was hand herringbone-stitched.

Some peculiarly 19th century methods are observed in order to achieve an accurate effect. One such method is that of bagging the curtain linings. This means that all curtain linings are sewn like a bag and turned inside out. Modern curtain makers suggest that the linings and curtains should not be together because they expand and contract at different rates and cause 'bunchiness'. Yet this is exactly what Elizabeth wanted, as it was the custom in the early 19th century. She also didn't worry about such details as the lining of curtains being visible from the front. Elizabeth feels she is 'too meticulous with her handwork for 19th century standards'.

When one looks at 19th century original work, there are often substantial variations in the length and type of stitches used. Much of the work would have been done by maids in their spare time, not specialist seamstresses. Several different maids would probably have been pulled in to do some straight sewing just as Elizabeth's mother and sister probably were.

Whilst modern interior decorators might be shocked at the idea of improvising, Elizabeth said that is exactly what she was aiming for at Elizabeth Farm, *appropriate imperfection* as James Broadbent sees it. Improvisation, Elizabeth said, was an important part of the Macarthur family's daily existence. In a newly established colony, the range of goods available would have been limited. It was necessary to bleach muslins to various degrees and to vary their quality depending on where they were used in the house. Elizabeth is not worried about dyeing material or matching things exactly.

Nor did she worry about using unrolled pyjama cord for cotton fringe or making silk fringe from silk material or using the garish blue trim on the bedhangings in the pink bedroom. What Elizabeth does worry about is the lack of so many simple materials such as good strong cotton thread, damask, muslin, Holland, 19th century tassels and ribbons. This can make a project such as Elizabeth Farm quite frustrating.

Elizabeth said you can't think of doing the work that she did at Elizabeth Farm in a commercial way. 'When you think about the hours you have spent and what you charge for it, you often think you are made for doing this type of work. You have to work slowly and patiently, learning as you go. You must continue to assess the work and be prepared if it is not hanging properly to re-do the entire piece.' It is this attitude combined with an intimate knowledge of 19th century life and social customs which contribute to the 'right feel' at Elizabeth Farm.

Sue Hunt is the Curator of Education at Elizabeth Farm, Parramatta.

Dining Room Curtains. *Chintz: Roses and Leaves, c.1850 (Ramm Son and Crocker), lining: cotton damask; ribbon edging.* Damask dyed to suit, sewn as bag, ribbon-bound; pleated heading. Hand sewn.

Table cover. *Green baize, natural wool bullion fringe (Colefax and Fowler).* Fringe dyed to suit. Baize, rolled edging; fringe sewn to edge. Hand sewn.

Entrance Hall table cover. *Wool camlet (Pallu and Lake), velvet ribbon (old).* Ribbon appliqué to border.

Drawing Room Curtains. *Chintz: Fleurs de Mai c.1835 (Brunschwig and Fils), lining: glazed cotton, linen fan edging (Colefax and Fowler). Sprigged voile (Scalamandré).* Sewn as bag, straight heading. Machine and hand sewn.

Table cover. *Wool camlet (Pallu and Lake).* Embroidered border. Hand sewn.

Library/Bedroom, bed hangings and cover. *Chintz: Custom House c.1830 (Brunschwig and Fils), lining: glazed cotton, linen fringe (Colefax and Fowler).* Scalloped festoon to tester, fringe hand sewn to edge; curtains sewn as bag.

Curtains. *Wool rep (Warners), wool rope (Colefax and Fowler).* Hand-rolled edges; wool dyed to suit, sewn to edges.

Table cover. *Damask (Warners), satin (old fabric).* Both dyed to suit, satin appliqué border.

Pink Bedroom Bed hangings. *Chintz: Emily c.1840 (Colefax and Fowler), lining: cotton damask, ribbon edging.* Swagged valance; curtains sewn as bag, ribbon bound, hand sewn.

Toilet table cloths. *Dimity (Brunschwig and Fils) spotted voile (Wardlaws).* Gathered underskirt; gathered and flounced overskirt. Machine and hand sewn.

Blinds. *Dimity (Brunschwig and Fils).* Copying old example, folding with brass rods, pulleys and cord. Machine and hand-sewn.

Mosquito nets. *Cotton gauze.* Hand-knotted fringe. Copying old example. Machine and hand sewn.

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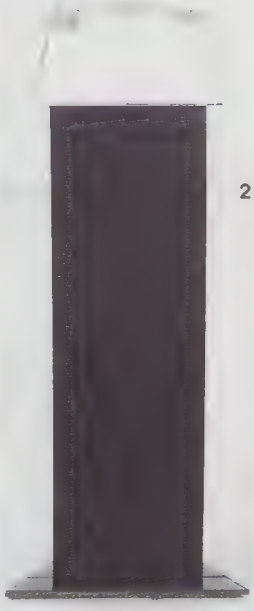

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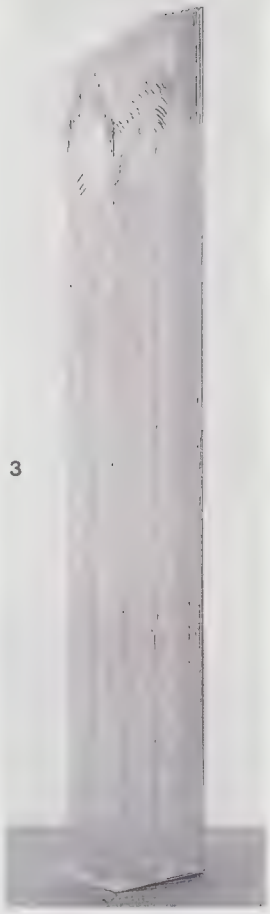

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Ausglass '85

Nola Anderson

The energy and immediacy of a conference belongs to its participants. Their subsequent work will reinterpret and renew the inspirations they have gained. But a national conference such as Ausglass '85 will also make significant statements for a wider community that records and documents its artists. It will give the artists a chance to articulate the social and philosophical context in which their work will be viewed.

I have then no qualms about discussing a conference of which my particular experience has been 16 cassette tapes and an armchair. What in the end remains of any conference is the work made by its participants and the words that have formally expressed their aspirations.

The conference had its range of philosophy, emotion and *nitty gritty*. Judging from the formal agenda, this was a conscious decision on the part of its organisers. It was a recognition that both practical and ideological issues must be addressed. There was, for example, no doubt that survival must be linked to very practical issues such as sales tax, loan systems and legal considerations. That is, if you like, the *nitty gritty*.

On the other hand, philosophical issues, or the broad body of thought that nurtures, explains and evaluates the artist and the art object, were also recognised to be significant issues.

It was clear, for example, that educators and students had highly developed philosophies about what made education work. Those philosophies, put into practice, must have a significant effect on future Australian glasswork.

The philosophies behind major collecting institutions will significantly affect what gets collected and the context that will express its meaning. Evaluative or explanatory frameworks constructed by art theorists must be based on some sort of philosophy and will affect the art context of an object.

The conference proceedings then, from my perspective, were extremely useful in underlining contemporary philosophical and practical issues and in some cases, the complex relationship between them.

Start with the topic which, to my mind, aroused some particularly interesting critical observations, internationalism and regionalism. Michael Esson, having curated the exhibition International Directions in Glass Art, had a considerable background to this issue and was able to make specific references to the Australian context.

Esson identified the issue in terms of artists' intentions. The same visual language can be used to observe, to express, to make a social comment or a universal contribution. These factors rather than stylistic trends determine the issue. The extremes of international fadism and narrow nationalism are to be avoided. Multiplicity and individuality is important. This theme was strongly put by a number of speakers and is one which, I think, would be readily accepted within the art world.

Esson expanded his theme by referring to the International Directions in Glass Art exhibition. It was an ideal opportunity to evaluate Australian glass in terms of internationalism and regionalism. As Esson pointed out, the artworks would create their own dialogue on the issue.

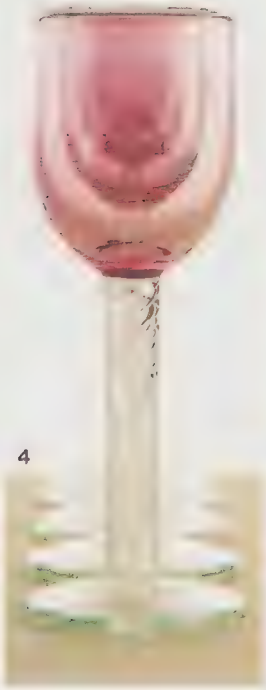
Judging from Esson's feelings about the impact that this exhibition had on glass art in Australia, there is a big difference between creating the opportunity for dialogue and actually coming to the meeting. Formal critical response to the exhibition was limited, and without that basic infrastructure the impact of such an exhibition would at best be local and short term. Some sort of transient entertainment' was one less optimistic possibility suggested by Esson.

Esson's final remarks about the whole issue of internationalism and regionalism questioned the usefulness a philosophical structure has for gleaning the meaning of an art object. In the end, 'internationalism and regionalism is a convenience for the critics, the curators, the art historians'. It was, he thought, 'almost completely irrelevant for makers and artists'.

With that, Esson touches on what this conference articulated on numerous occasions. The real meanings, value or solutions to significant issues will be provided by the object. It's up to the artist to make it. Philosophy finds its solution in the real object.

The pervasive seduction of the new was another issue raised during the conference. The cult of newness, it

1. Ian Mowbray, SA. Slumped, fused glass.
2. Mark Davoren, NSW. Fused sheet glass.
3. Sergio Redegalli, NSW. Cold laminated glass.



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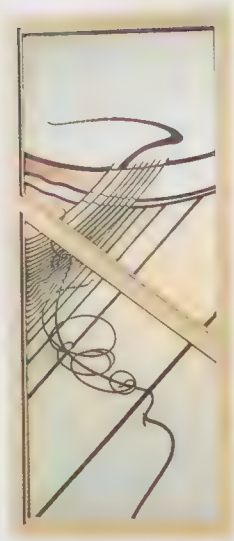

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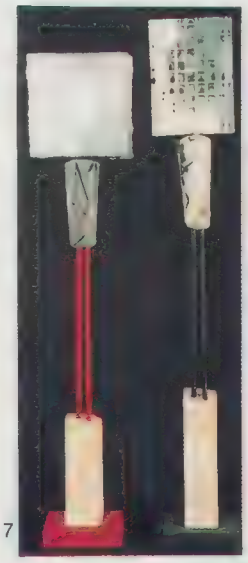

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4. Tom Persson, SA. Blown goblets.

5. Cherry Phillips, NSW. Lead-light.

6. Jeff Hamilton, NSW. Lead-light.

7. Michael Keighery, NSW. Clay *maquette* for glass sculpture.

8. Anne Dybka, NSW. Cameo-cut glass.

9. Alasdair Gordon, WA. Engraved glass.

10. Rod Smith, SA. Fused glass.

was suggested at one point, could even be interpreted as a contemporary style.

Lloyd Herman pointed out that the sheer volume of work submitted for competitions in America makes it almost a practical necessity in these circumstances to be new. It can be a case of not new, not noticed. A stylistic consequence of population? Given the much smaller population of craftspeople in Australia, the problem may not be as acute, but is, nonetheless, an important issue to note.

Lloyd Herman recognised that in time, the 'new' techniques will be made mere tools, presumably by those who have had sufficient individual creative stamina to develop their own interpretations.

Not all philosophy however could be resolved by the object. In some instances it positively got in the way. Discussions of sales tax, for instance, indicated the need to define for bureaucratic purposes the difference between art and other handmade objects.

Those who have solved the art-craft debate by saying the argument is irrelevant will be of no help here. This particular instance shows that option to be a luxury within the art world but of little use beyond it. And there is no recourse on this occasion to placing all responsibility on the object. Unfortunately the most workable definitions here usually have little to do with the delicacies of aesthetic philosophy.

Philosophy and the object came face to face again in 'Historical Perspectives'. On the one hand, an artist must justify his object. As Dr Peter Emmett outlined, the contemporary object no longer automatically inherits cultural meaning. It lacks a context that would unite practical and aesthetic traditions. On the other hand, the gallery and museum will also add their own justifications to the object.

Take the latter point first. Lloyd Herman discussed the role that museums and galleries play in providing an historical perspective for the objects they collect. He illustrated his point by outlining at least five different perspectives which could be applied to a piece of Tiffany glass. Those perspectives will differ according to the aims of each gallery. In one instance the piece could be valued for its place in the history of taste. Another gallery may place it within a tradition of individual expression and so on.

It becomes obvious that the simple experience of looking at an art object is not, after all, so simple. The viewer's response will probably be influenced not only by the artist's intentions, but also by the context within which the piece is displayed. In these circumstances the gallery policy may have a significant effect on the meaning of the object.

Dr Emmett also recognised a dilemma within the modern craft movement that centred on its loss of a tradition of cultural meaning. This perhaps is one reason why, despite what perspectives may be applied to the work in the future, an artist must create his own justification or integrity. Again the need to go beyond materials and processes, and hence beyond the fascination of the new, was critical. In this instance philosophy becomes a tool the artist uses to gauge the value and directions of his or her work.

The thread that bound all these issues together was the insistence on individual creativity and responsibility. Ten years ago, when there were fewer options and even fewer opportunities, the craftsperson was encouraged and embraced, at least by the fraternity if not by the wider community, as someone who would make it; who set about achieving their goals despite obvious difficulties. They were not called upon, however, to justify those goals, they were taken for granted.

Now craftspeople have inherited a much more complex role. With the broader philosophical, practical and geographical arena to work in, they have discovered a greater responsibility, to themselves and to the object.

Cultural meaning must be analysed, even created. The way the medium is taught must be evaluated. Overseas influences, and local issues, must be thought through. And professionalism, as Julia Higgleton of NAVA pointed out, means artists must assume responsibility for their own advancement and status.

From these perspectives it might be feasible to say that a new contemporary cultural tradition will be the role an artist has been given in resolving the relationship between philosophy and object.

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Ausglass '85 panels.

Personal Perspectives.
Lloyd Herman. Director of the Renwick Gallery, USA. *Jochem Poensgen*. Architectural glass artist, Dusseldorf, Germany. *Durk Valkema* and *Anna Carlgren*. Hot glass artists, Amsterdam, Holland.

Australian and New Zealand Perspectives.
Slide talks by representatives from each Australian state and New Zealand.

Historical Perspectives.
Lloyd Herman, *Dr Peter Emmett*. Director, Crafts Council Gallery, Sydney. *Annette Keenan*. Curator of Glass, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney. *Geoffrey Edwards*. Curator of Glass, National Gallery of Victoria.

Education. Aspects of Formal and Informal Education.
Presented by students and individuals with professional involvement.

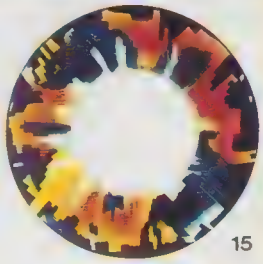
Professional Development.
Shane Simpson. Director, Arts Law Centre. *Julia Higgleton*. National Association of the Visual Arts. *Jane Burns*. Executive Director, Crafts Council of Australia.

The reality of survival.
Papers presented by individuals 'well versed in the rigours of survival'.

The reality of growing.
Discussions of the aesthetic, technical and business development of individual artists. Speakers included *Jochem Poensgen*, *Clifford Rainey* (glass artist, UK), *Relton Leaver*, *Durk Valkema* and *Anna Carlgren*.

Regionalism and Internationalism.
Lloyd Herman, *David Wright*, *Michael Esson* and *Cedar Prest*.

Summation: Models for the future.



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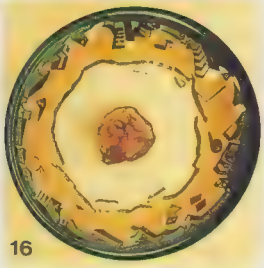

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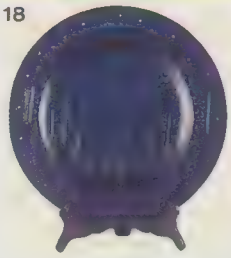

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11. David Cubby, NSW. Photograph/perspex.

12. Colin Heany, NSW. Blown glass.

13. Giselle Courtney, NSW. Screen-printed glass.

14. Neil Roberts, ACT. Cut and cold laminated glass.

15. Mezza Rijsdijk, ACT. Fused glass.

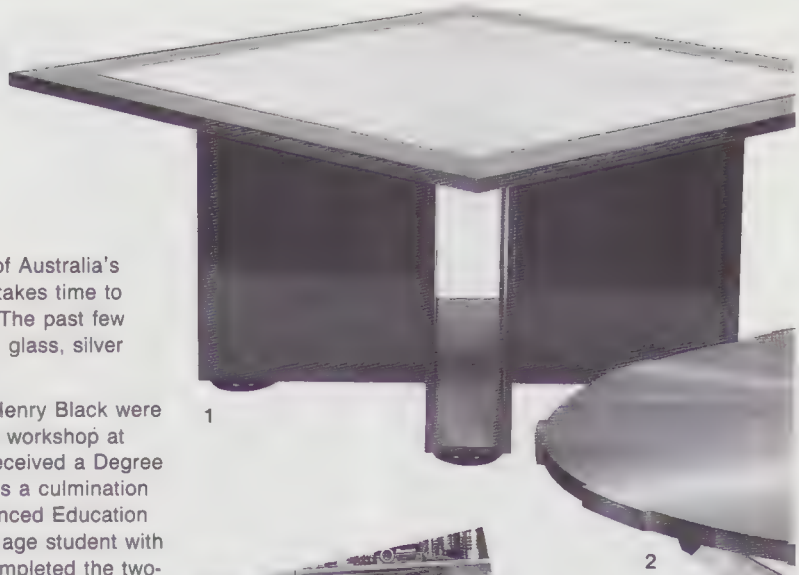
16. Tony Hanning, Vic. Blown and sandblasted bowl.

17. Chris Pantano, Qld. Slumped and fused glass.

18. Vicki Torr, SA. Slumped and fused glass.

19. Judy Hancock, SA. Blown and flame-worked glass.

Canberra's first wood graduates



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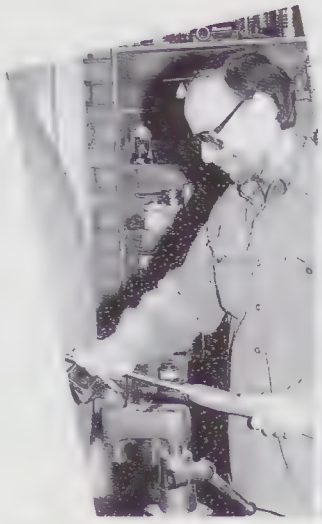

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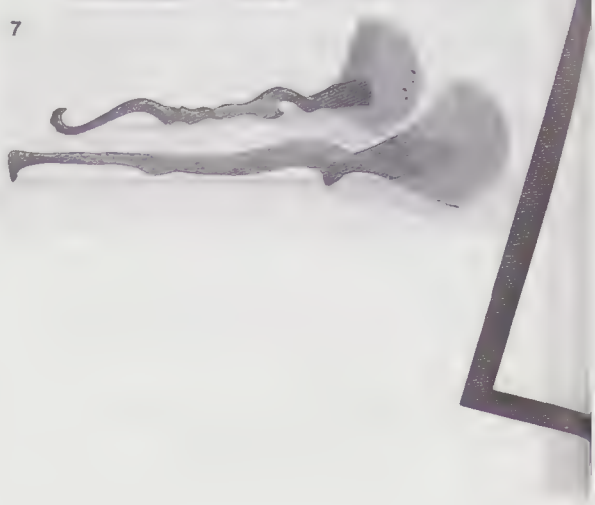

Henry Black

1. *Table*. Veneered and painted Huon pine and Tasmanian blackwood.
2. *Dining table*. Rose mahogany, European and silver ash.
3. *Dining table* detail.
4. *Container*. Huon pine, purple heart, pigskin interior.
5. *Container* detail.
6. *Dining chair*. Rose mahogany, European and silver ash.

Marc Lewis

7. *Ladles*. Huon pine and myrtle.
8. *Display cabinet*. Beefwood, ebony and ripple ash. 500 × 300 × 200 mm.
9. *Display cabinet* opened.
10. *Chair*. Myrtle and ripple ash. 1800 mm high.

The Canberra School of Art is one of Australia's newest art schools. A new school takes time to develop workshops and programmes. The past few years have seen the development of a glass, silver and metalsmithing and a wood studio.

In November, 1984, Marc Lewis and Henry Black were the first graduates from the new wood workshop at Canberra School of Art. Marc Lewis received a Degree in Visual Arts in sculpture and wood as a culmination of studies at Riverina College of Advanced Education and Canberra. Henry Black, a mature age student with an engineering trades background, completed the two-year Associate Diploma in wood.

Craft Australia interviewed these two artists about their craft. Marc Lewis speaks about his work: 'My work is mainly concerned with creating an elegance of form and line. I do not see myself as a designer in the contemporary sense of the word, although design and ergonomic considerations are an important part of the creative process. I am always trying to achieve a certain magic in each piece. Consequently I work mostly with one-off pieces, developing an idea through drawings to a basic concept, then tackling the structural implications of making the object, mainly through technical drawings. I rarely use mock-ups unless there is something that is structurally unclear, as my sculptural training has given me the ability to visualise forms from my drawings. This makes mock-ups superfluous.'

'I try to allow improvisational freedom in my work, although it is not always possible as technical considerations often hinder this way of working. Carving techniques give me the most freedom.'

'Because of my bias towards creative experimentation, I plan to sell my work through galleries, rather than the traditional designer/client environment.'

Henry Black told ***Craft Australia***: 'I wish to design furniture that is visually exciting, innovative in shape and colour, and user-friendly as a result of consultations with the client. I aim for a degree of skill that is implicit, rather than contrived by the use of conspicuous joinery. Traditional cabinetmaking techniques are used where applicable, however, I consider modern methods of construction equally valid providing they do not compromise the piece in any way. My previous experience as a pattern and model-maker allows me the freedom to design pieces which feature nontraditional materials and finishes, and utilise machinery in innovative ways.'

'Handtools and machinery are of equal importance in my workshop. I use machinery for quick sizing through to finished shapes and handtools for all the jobs and effects that machines will never do. I also collect handtools and find a use for all of them at some time or another in the workshop.'

'In designing a piece, I do a rough sketch and then make a scale model and/or a full size mock-up. I find this especially valuable for actually testing the ergonomic aspects of chairs and other furniture.'

'During 1985 I will be making exhibition pieces, exploring geometric line and the use of the lathe in furniture making. Through exhibiting I hope to introduce new possibilities in furniture making and attract commissions for future work.'

Henry and Marc had an exhibition of their work in the Crafts Centre Gallery in Sydney in early 1985.

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GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

Galleries and Exhibitors is a feature in ***Craft Australia*** that aims to provide exposure for work which is either on exhibition at the time of publication or has been exhibited during the quarter of the year preceding publication. It is open to craftspeople, galleries (national, regional and private), organisations and guilds that submit the following information together with suitable colour slides or black and white photographs:

Name of exhibitor (maker)
Title of work (if titled)
Media
Technique
Materials used
Dimensions
Year of execution

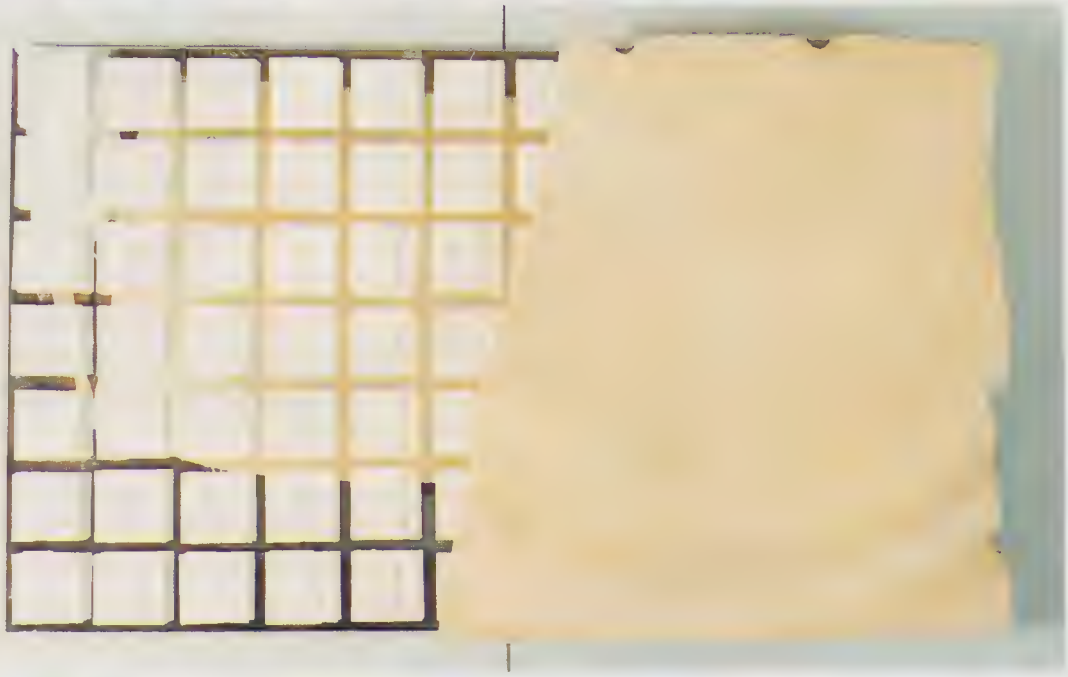
Name of Gallery or venue where shown together with opening and closing dates of exhibition

1. **Michael Keighery**, NSW. *Untitled.* Sandstone, mirror and clay. Ausglass '85.

2. **Neil Roberts**, ACT. *Fused panels.* Ausglass '85.

3. **Scott Chaseling**, SA. *Blown and assembled glass form.* Ausglass '85.

4. **Eileen Gordon**, SA. *Blown and assembled glass.* Ausglass '85.



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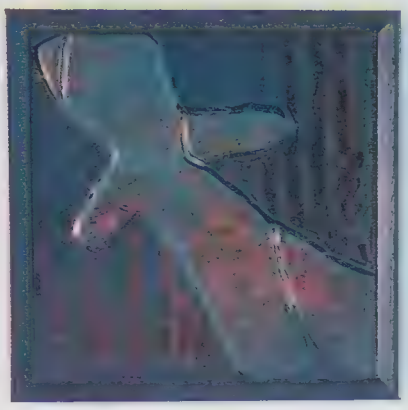

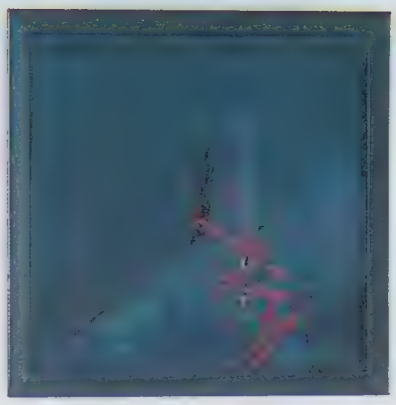

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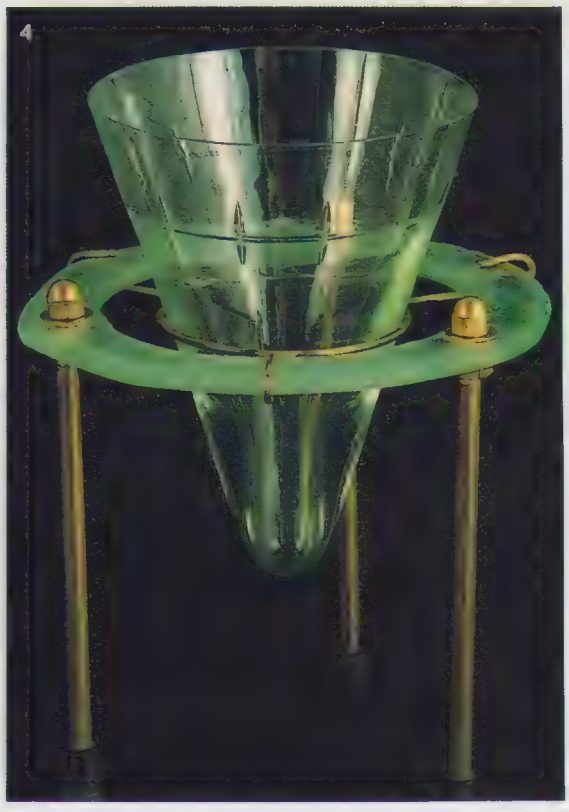

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5. **Heather Dorrough**, NSW. *Glass and mixed media.* Ausglass '85.

6. **Frederic Chepeaux**, NSW. *Clay and glass.* Ausglass '85

7. **Richard Morrell**, Vic. *Blown bottles.* Ausglass '85.

8. **Unidentified**, ACT. *Fused glass.* Ausglass '85.

9. **Nick Mount**, SA. *Glass canes.* Ausglass '85.

10. **Stephen Morris**, NSW. *Blown and moulded bust.* Ausglass '85.

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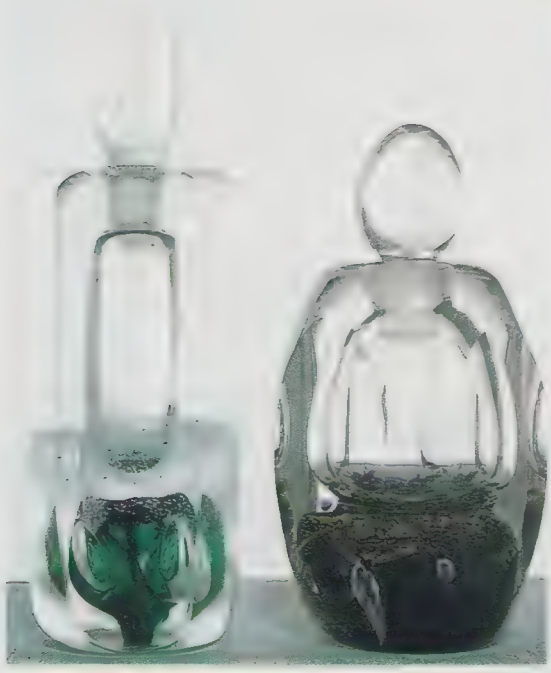

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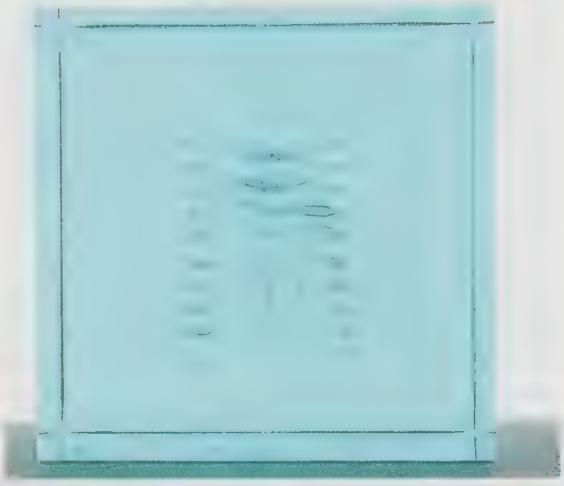

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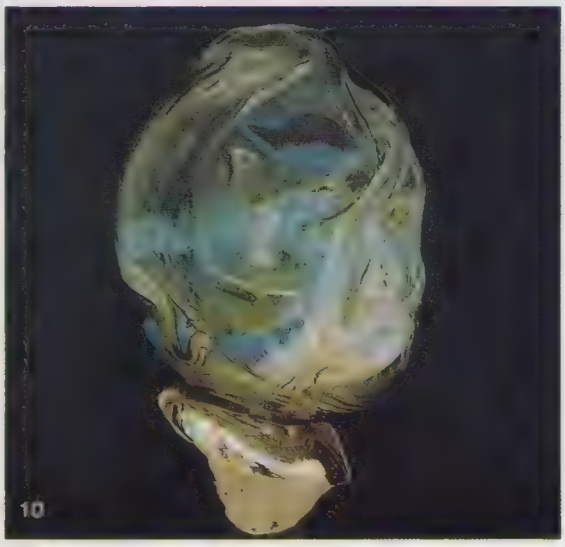

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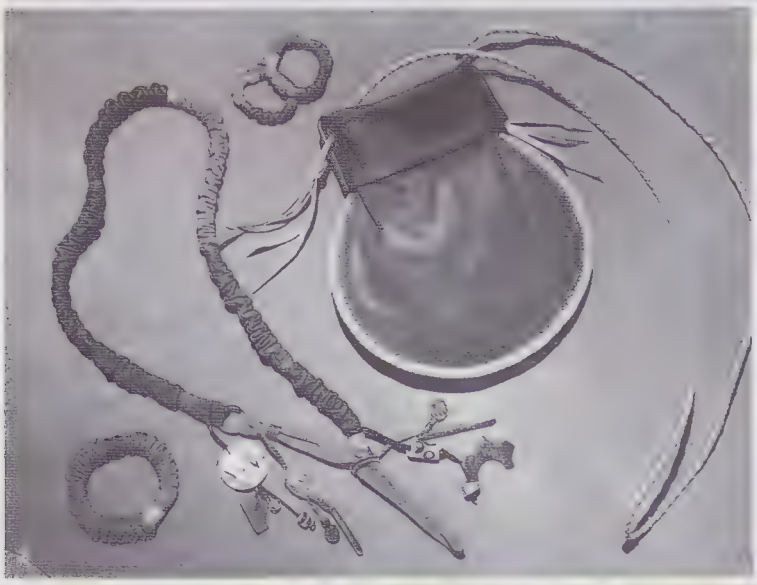
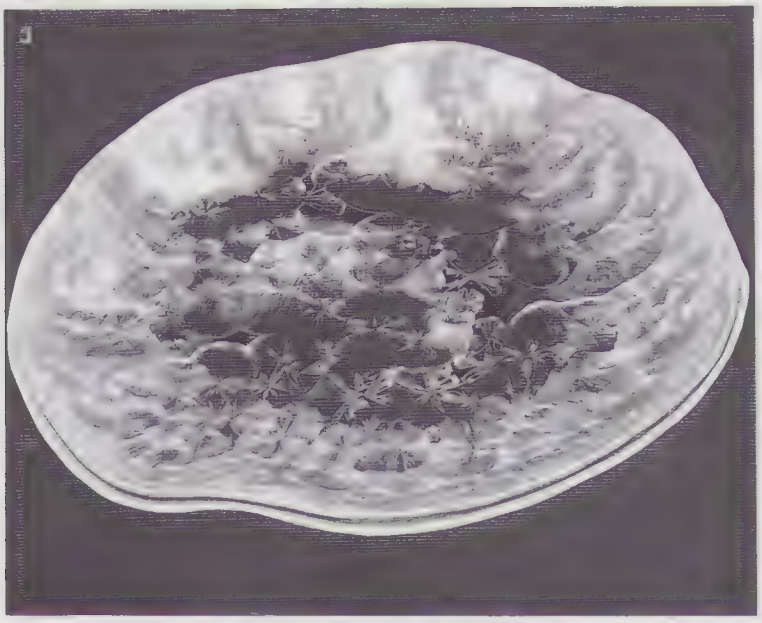
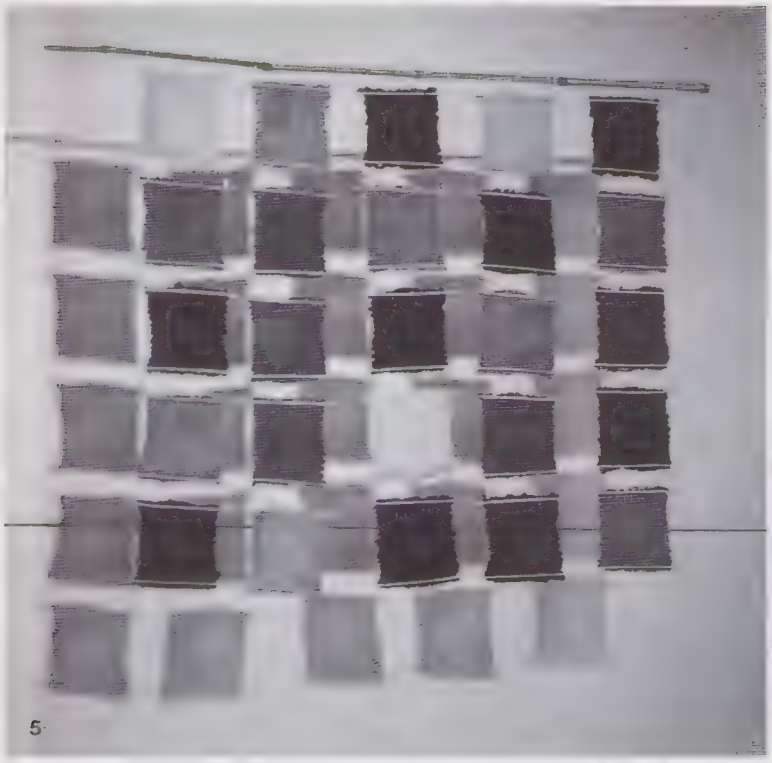
GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

1. **Don Court**. *Lidded containers*. Various iron glazes. 1300°C. Sturt Gallery, Mittagong.
2. **Robyn Mico**. *Belt, bracelet, earrings and bag*. Pigskin. 1984. The Bloomfield Galleries, Paddington. Photo Tim Brook.
3. **Barbara Cauvin**. *Porcelain platter* with double rim and crystalline glazed. Handmark Gallery, Hobart. Photo Concept Photographics.
4. **Nicola Eveleigh**. Student, Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education. Sculptural competition, Walker Ceramics, Brisbane.





GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS



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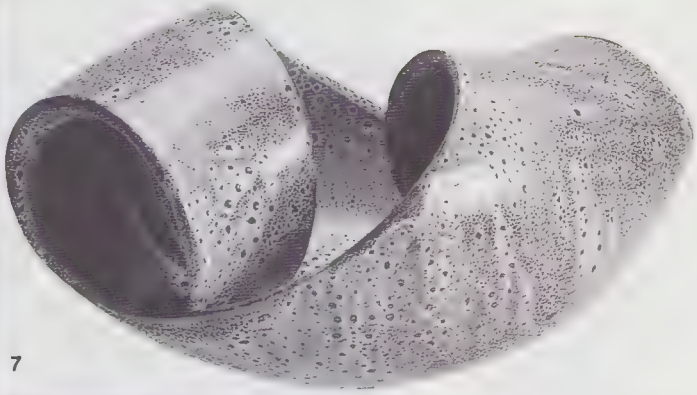

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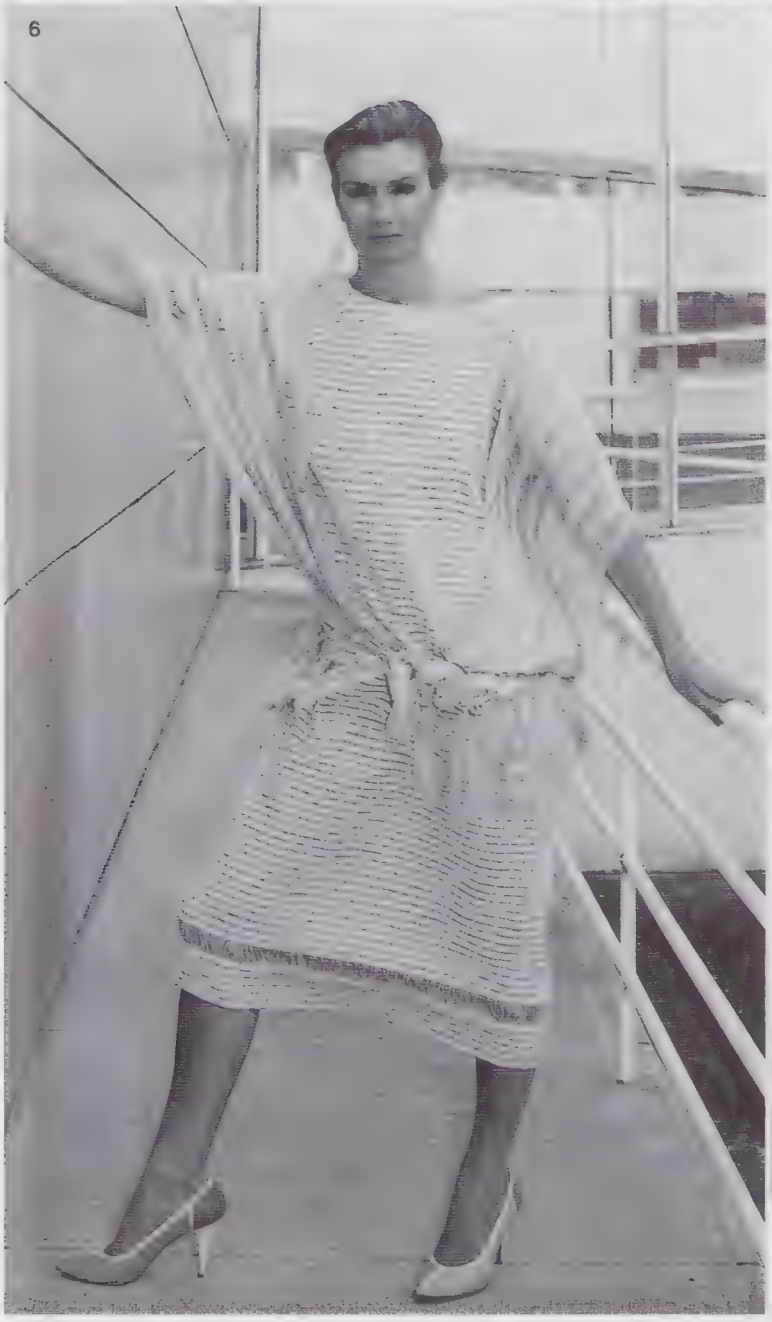

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5. **Jill Hudson**. *Playing with Colour*. Hand-dyed yarns. Long Gallery, Hobart.

6. **Sylvia Parr**, handweaver. **Maryanne Miller**, designer-dressmaker. *Gleichenia Dicarpa*. Silk and cotton dress in shades of green. Long Gallery, Hobart.

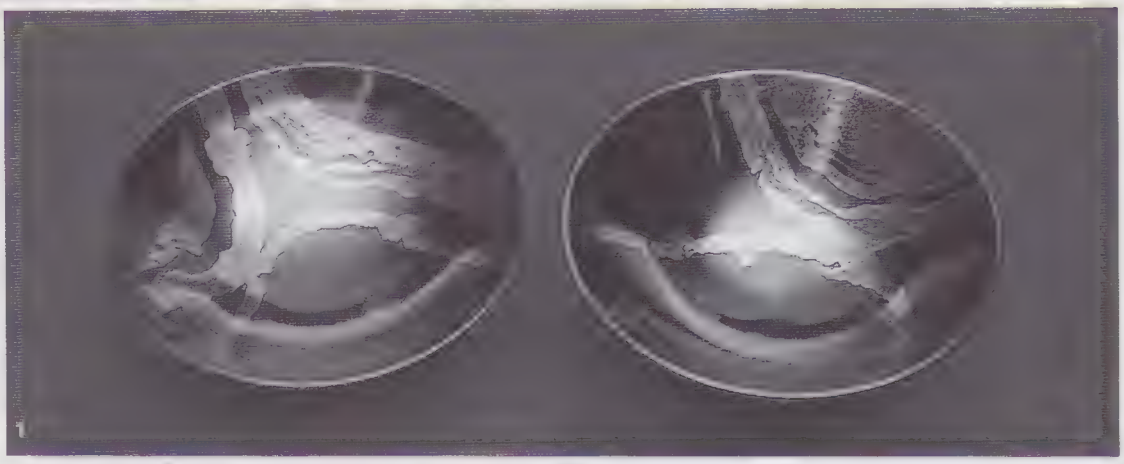
7. **Barbara Cauvin**. *Handcoiled stonewear*, sculptured form. 23 × 43 × 34cms. Handmark Gallery, Hobart. Photo Concept Photographics.

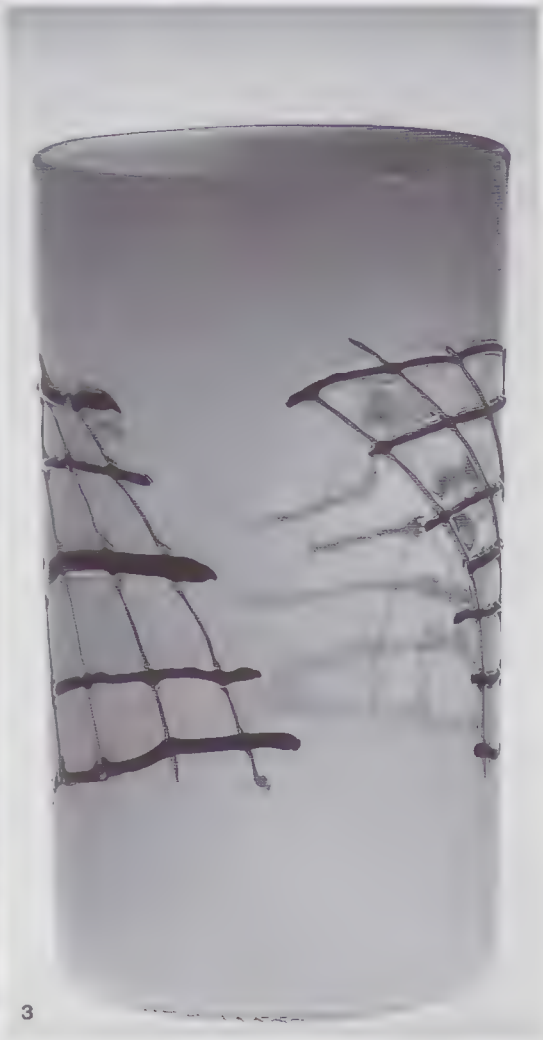
8. **Robyn Mico**. *Briefcase*. Calf and sheepskin, feathers and braids, closed with porcupine quill. The Bloomfield Galleries, Paddington. Photo Tim Brook.

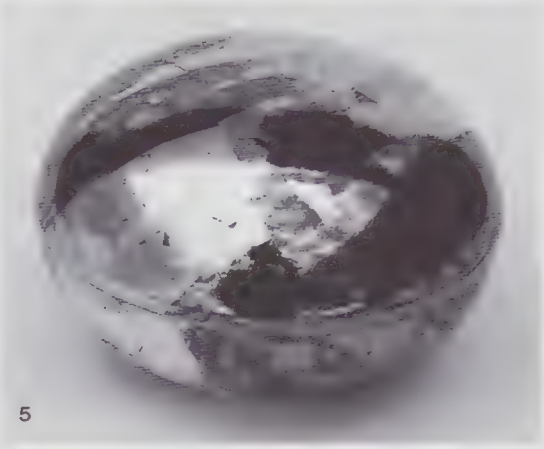
9. **Paul Freeland**. *Wood Alive* Exhibition. Holdsworth Galleries, Woollahra, NSW.

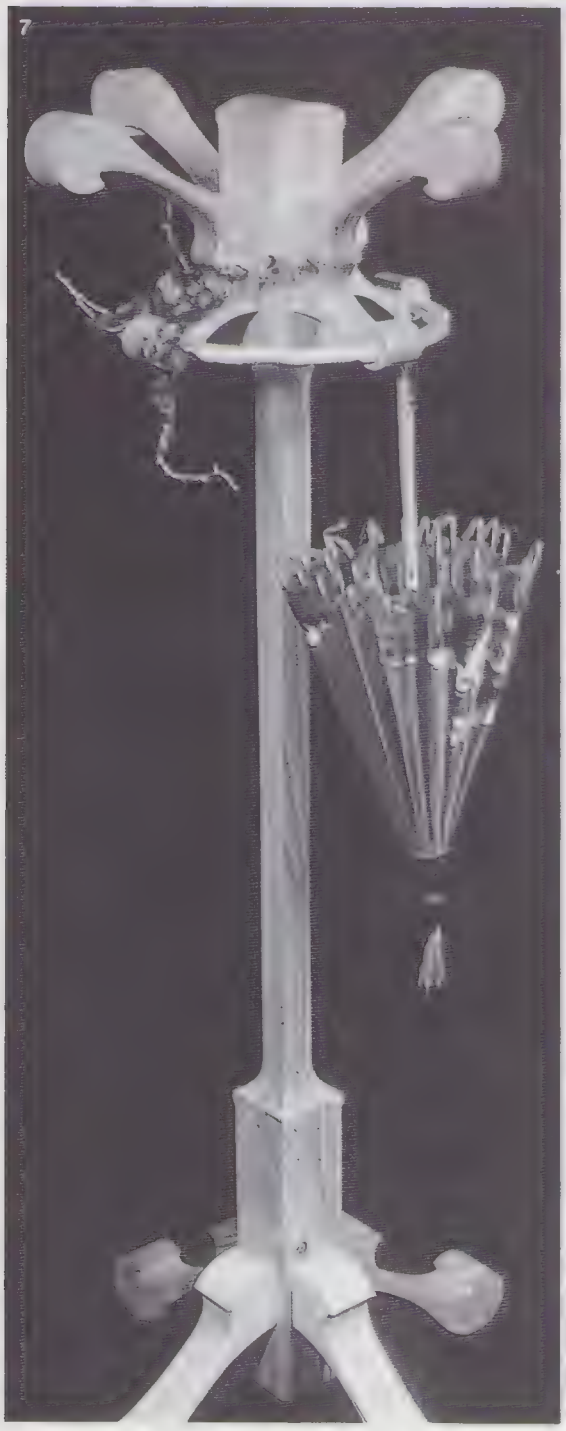
GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

1. **Tony Johnson**. *2 bowls*. Porcelain, black glaze and lustres. 20 cms. Narek Galleries, Cuppacumbalong, ACT.
2. **Bruce Anderson**. *Raku Pot*. Blackware and *raku*. Narek Galleries, Cuppacumbalong, ACT.
3. **Keith Rowe**. *Hot Glass*. Blown glass, acid etched. 30 cm. Narek Galleries, Cuppacumbalong, ACT.
4. **Greg Daly**. *Lustred lidded container* with gold leaf. 120 cms diameter. Distelfink, Hawthorn, Victoria.
5. **Greg Daly**. *Lustred porcelain bowl* with gold leaf. Distelfink, Hawthorn, Victoria.









6. **Kelly McCulloch**. *Eucalypt burl turning*. Warranah Woodcraft Gallery, Katoomba. Photo R. Taggart.
7. **Don Roberts**. *Coat and hat rack*. Warranah Woodcraft Gallery, Katoomba. Photo R. Taggart.
8. **Jeff Mincham**. *Selection of pots*. Araluen Arts Centre, Alice Springs. Photo Nigel Jefford.

GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

1. **Les Blakebrough.** *Porcelain Sphere.* Blue and red trailed glaze. 130 mm x 115 mm. Handmark Gallery, Hobart. 1984.

2. **Pauline Osborn.** *Yileen. Translated 'Dream'.* Undyed Australian wool. 54 x 40 cm. Heritage Gallery, Nelson Bay, N.S.W. 1984

3. **Tori De Mestre.** *Winter Curtain.* 1984. Knitted fabrics, painted cane. 110 x 220 cms. Gryphon Gallery, Melbourne, April 1985. Photo Sally Abbott-Smith.

4. **Jan Simons.** *Kangaroo drawstring bag.* Kangaroo suede trim and lining, Batik decoration silk tassles. 20 x 20 x 20 cms. Broken Hill City Art Gallery, Oct-Nov 1984. Photo Michal Kluvanek.

5. **Janine Grose.** *Tall jug.* Gold Coast Potters Association Members Exhibition, 1984.

6. **Hugh McLachlan.** *Bracelet. The Circus, Part Two.* Huon pine, sterling silver, epoxy resin. Honorable mention, **Ornament** Second International Jewellery Award.

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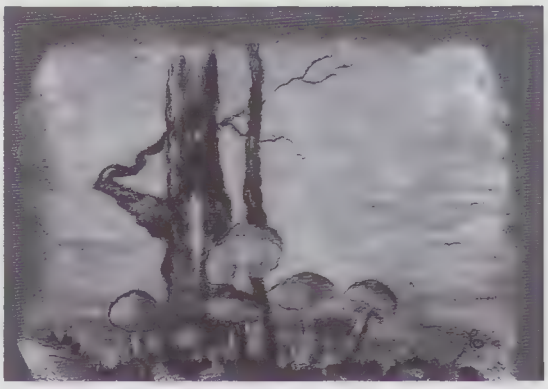

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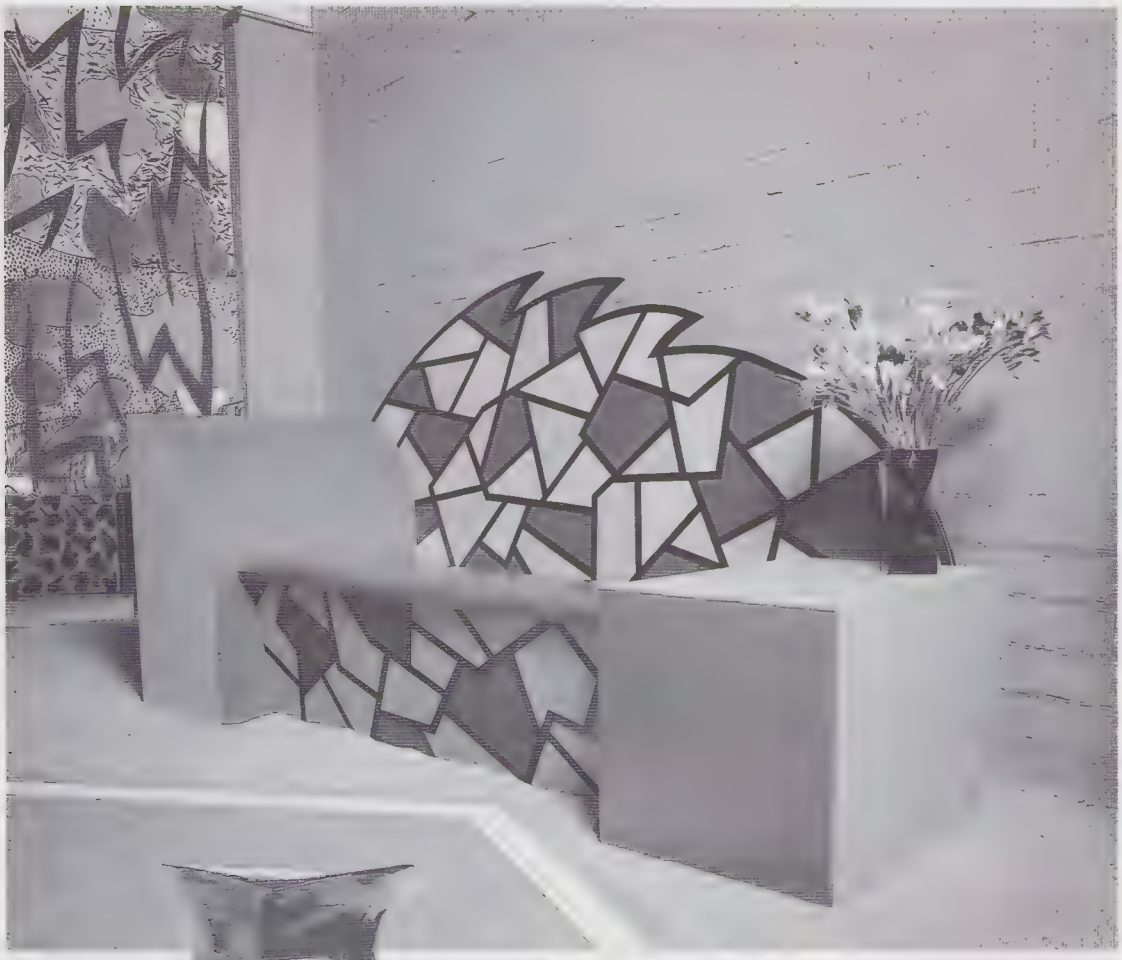

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7. **Annabelle Collett.** *Soffola Sofa* 2 Seater Couch. Wood, custom board, acrylic paint, vinyl and laminex. Devise Gallery, South Melbourne. September 1984.

8. **Freya Povey.** *See These Lips — Be on 'em in Five Minutes.* 1984. Clay. Glaze, body stain and acrylic paint. 57 x 47 cms. Devise Gallery, South Melbourne. Photo Michal Kluvanek.

9. **Roger Webb.**
10. *Teapot.* Porcelain. Seasons Gallery, North Sydney, October 1984.

GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

1. **Tricia Bygott.** *Altered Still Life.* Appliqué. Meat Market, Melbourne. 1984

2. **Nerida Barford.** *Teapots.* Gold Coast Potters Association Exhibition. 1984.

3. **Jane Dyer.** *The Wedding Party.* Painted fabric. 1.8 × 1.8 m. Blackwood Street Gallery, North Melbourne. 1984.

4. **Toni Warburton.** *Water Vessel.* Mori Gallery, Leichhardt, NSW. 1984.

5. **Alex Mitrovic.** *Butterfly Set.* Blown glass forms. Glass Artists Gallery, Paddington, NSW. 1984.

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What is post-modernism? John Walker provides some definitions in this excerpt from his book **Art in the Age of Mass Media** (Pluto Press, $12.95). The book is not a conventional history of art but a contribution to artistic practice and cultural politics. Mr Walker is a lecturer in the history of art and design at Middlesex Polytechnic in Britain.

Post-Modernism

John A. Walker

Discussions of the arts, design, fashion and sub-cultures in the late 1970s and early 1980s have been notable for the frequency with which the terms/concepts 'pluralism' and 'post-modernism' have occurred. Before these concepts can be explained, it is necessary to examine, schematically, the term/concept 'modernism'.

Modernism is an aesthetic ideology which has dominated artistic practice in the west for approximately 125 years. Its central assumptions and themes may be summarised as follows:

1. Modernists rejected the stylistic anarchism and eclecticism of Victorian art and design on the grounds that a new age of machines and technology had been born. They therefore considered it necessary to develop new forms appropriate to the new situation. Some modernists believed that it was essential to create a new style, a modern style, based upon such principles as 'form follows function' and the dictates of new materials, machines and techniques; others believed that any art and design based upon such principles would be styleless.

2. Since modernists believed that a new age had dawned — the modern age — they insisted on a complete break with the past, with history and tradition. Novelty and originality became overriding values. 'Reject what has gone before' became the rule which new generations of modernists were expected to obey. Soon it became a tradition in itself (which explains Harold Rosenberg's paradoxical phrase 'the tradition of the new').

3. Modernists rejected decoration and ornament on the grounds that they were, first, a residue of primitivism, and, second, superfluous. They preferred geometric to organic forms; they espoused the values of simplicity, clarity, uniformity, purity, order and rationality.

4. Modernists rejected national, regional and vernacular styles. They were in favour of an international style, claiming that the tenets of modernism were universally applicable.

5. Modernist architects and designers professed to be producing the art of the future. They were frequently inspired by socialist ideals and wished to sweep away the old order to create a brave new world which would in itself improve human behaviour. But modernists saw themselves as experts who knew best. Consequently, they tended to impose their solutions upon the masses without regard to popular tastes or preferences. Participation in design decisions by the people was virtually non-existent. The most disastrous results of this attitude were the hated new tower blocks of public housing estates.

It should be acknowledged that not all tendencies within modernism manifested the above characteristics, which are, of course, extremely generalised. Expressionism and Surrealism, for example, did not.

Around the late 1960s, a number of critics began to argue that modernism was exhausted, that it had become a period style. By then, modernism had its own history; it had arrived at an orthodoxy which had to be overthrown by the very logic, continual novelty, of modernism itself. Disillusionment with the ideals of the modern movement became widespread. It was prompted by the failures of modern architecture and planning, and by the frenetic turnover of artistic revolutions which had little or no social value or impact. The term 'post-modernism' entered the critical vocabulary.

As Charles Jencks has explained, the term 'post-modernism' indicates a half-way house: it is clear what is being left behind, but not what is replacing it. (**The Language of Post-Modern Architecture** 1977.) (The label 'post-modernism' does not supply any information about the characteristics of the works subsumed by it.) In the post-modernist era, modernism continues, Jencks employs the expression 'late modernism', but it exists simply as one stylistic option amongst many others.

What then are the typical features of post-modernism? As one might expect they reverse or modify many of the tenets of modernism:

1. The modernist idea that each age has only one style is rejected in favour of the idea that a plurality of styles exists. Eclecticism, hybrid styles, becomes fashionable. No single style appears to be dominant.

2. History and tradition (including the history of modernism) become available again — hence, 'retro-style' via the use of 'quotations' and the technique of collage, involving recyclings, parodies and pastiches of old styles.

3. Ornament and decoration become acceptable again.

4. Complexity and contradiction (the title of a book by the American architect Robert Venturi) and ambiguity are the values which replace simplicity, purity and rationality. Mixtures of high and low culture, fine art and commercial art styles are encouraged as a way of producing buildings capable of yielding multi-layered readings appealing to audiences of different levels of sophistication and knowledge.

5. Post-modernists are concerned with *meaning*, that is, they treat architecture and design as 'languages' which can be used to construct all kinds of different statements.

6. The basic characteristic of art, inter-textuality, is heightened in post-modernism. 'Inter-textuality' is a term which indicates that every literary text or work of art relates to, alludes to, or comments upon (either implicitly or explicitly) various other texts or works.

Two opposite reactions to stylistic and cultural pluralism are possible. First, positive: 'a rich and healthy variety'; 'demonstrates the freedom of choice typical of western democracies as against the totalitarian uniformity of art in the Soviet Union'; 'cross-fertilisation, hybrid styles are interesting and amusing'; 'hierarchies are broken down'. Second, negative: 'stylistic anarchism'; 'a mannerist phase'; 'unhealthy obsession with the past'; 'shallow and superficial'; 'the sign of a divided, decadent society which is incapable of producing a consensus'.

Cartoon. Copyright **Punch**, London.

"... And I'd also like to thank the people of Taiwan for making this award."

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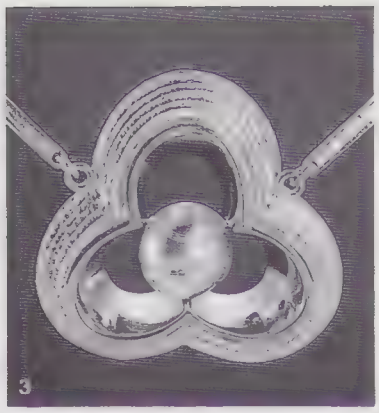

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Australian Trophies and Awards

1. **Victorian horse-racing trophies.** Debbie Sheezel, Toorak, Victoria.

   Debbie has received several commissions for racing awards as well as a mural.

2. **Australian Cricket Trophy** (1877). Silver with emu eggs, glass comports and dish. Designed by William Kerr. Photo courtesy of The Trustees, Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences.

   As Australian as a meat pie.

3. **Men's Indoor Tennis Tournament.** Custom Credit Corporation.

   This pendant made in Finland incorporates the *Custom Credit* logo. The actual trophy uses the simple trilobal design for a simplified and more effective image.

4. **Sitmar Trophy.** Australian Bridge Federation. Sitmar Cruises.

   Denis James, a Sydney jeweller designed this award. Although gold and silver were used, this does not show up in photography.

5. **Australian Film Institute Award.** Australian Film Institute.

   This perspex award designed by Ken Wragg and Geoff Bond was faceted to reflect light under TV lighting. This *techno-futuristic* piece lacks a distinctive profile.

6. **The Melbourne Cup** 1984. The Victorian Racing Club. Goldsmith F. Rocca.

If one took all the trophies awarded annually in Australia, they could probably reach the entire length of the Birdsville Track. A good many of these trophies couldn't find a better resting place. ***Craft Australia*** recently surveyed some of the better-known annual awards to see if this was an area where Australian craftspeople could become involved. Several well-known artists were already there, but there's plenty of room for more as this feature reveals.

When one thinks of trophies and awards, cups of gold and silver surface in the memory. These cups are rounded vessels mounted on a long stem that flows gracefully into a flared base. This description no longer describes most Australian awards.

An investigation into contemporary awards reveals that very few trophy designers rely on cup forms although the major consumer of cups remains the horse-racing industry. While the *Bong Bong Cup* and the *Melbourne Cup* are the best known, most states and localities also award a racing cup.

Why a cup? Talking with Barbara Noble of *Maker's Mark* in Melbourne, ***Craft Australia*** learned that the size of an award is crucial in the track-side mêlée following a race. The award must be large enough to be seen by the crowd and it must be photogenic. Imagine the awkwardness of waving around a horse-shaped sculpture or an earthenware bowl. Nothing serves as well as a stemmed cup at trackside.

The trend in contemporary trophies, however, is to abandon the cup entirely. The *anthropomorphic* style is the current fashion followed by a sleek *techno-futurist* look that seems more popular each year. Most of the *anthro* and *techno* styles are suitably sized and photogenic.

Some of the *anthro* styles seen overseas, however, aren't so attractive. The well-known Hollywood *Oscar* seems like an unhappy cross between a hip flask and a vibrator. Some *anthro* styles are dated and it's time for a revision.

The *techno* style may not be the answer. While most of the *techno* awards surveyed have the high finish and sharp edges associated with this style, few of the awards have the graphic silhouette necessary for electronic and graphic media reproduction. Publicity is crucial for these awards.

This lack of graphic definition is especially notable in the ABC Sports of the Year award. While it may be a nice bit of design, it photographs badly. This is also true of the AFI award.

More dramatic profiles are found in some of the *techno* styles such as the Sitmar Trophy for Bridge, the Custom Credit Tennis award and the Castrol Six-Hour motorcycle race award. While lacking in originality these awards allow good photography.

Symbolism is another area of concern for designers. If the symbolism is too complex, it is incomprehensible to the casual viewer. The actual winning of an award should be symbolism enough for the victor. But will this satisfy the commissioner of the work? One suspects the poignant symbolism of some trophies is intended for the boardroom rather than the victory circle.

The Custom Credit Indoor Tennis Trophy pendant (made in Finland), for example, is a highly symbolic work: 'The structure in the design symbolises Custom Credit's growth and influence within the community. Positioned in the centre of the design is the representation of a gold tennis ball, signifying Custom Credit's harmonious relationship with the world of sport.' The actual trophy, to its credit, omits the harmonious tennis ball and the whole is mounted on a rectangular plinth.

When trophies are sponsored by business, the companies seem loath to use their company name. This false modesty works to the disadvantage of some trophies and awards. If the donor/commissioner has a tasteful logo, why not use it? The Custom Credit Award is a good example. The BHP award for the Pursuit of Excellence lacks this company identification. Perhaps because the BHP logo is so ordinary. However, a remarkable media campaign by the George Patterson agency planted this award firmly in the public eye. In this case, the company identification is not necessary.

There is a role for Australian craftspeople in this award saga. Too few artists have produced Australian awards. A quick poll found that Mary Michelmore (SA), Paul Spooner (SA), Dorothy Erickson (WA), David Walker (WA), Debbie Sheezel (Vic) and Peter Gertler (Vic) have produced presentation pieces and awards. There are others too. Barbara Noble of *Maker's Mark* seems one of the key figures in matching awards to craftspeople. Ms Noble cautions that her experiences with awards suggested modest commissions in the range of $300-$500. However, for perpetual awards retained by the commissioner, one could afford to commission a truly singular award.

The State Crafts Councils have a coordinating role to play too. Craftspeople in metals, enamels, wood, glass and ceramics could and should address the problems of trophies and awards. It is also an area that award sponsors should examine more closely. These awards represent company image, achievement and a public relations harvest of good will. Their awards designers should be chosen carefully.

Features of a well-designed award:

- Strong graphic presence for media reproduction
- Photogenic when held by award winner
- Size and scale (should be of 'impressive' size)
- Concise image (symbolic and visual)
- A distinctive, original image

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7. **Castrol Six Hour.** Annual motorcycle race. Richard Scott (L) Mike Dawson (R) 1984 winners.

   An ideal image for this sport. The '6' is of fibreglass.

8. **Logie. TV Week** acting award. Recent winners Grant Dodwell and Tina Bursill.

   This *anthro* style award is too small and not photogenic.

9. **The Winfield Cup.** Sydney Rugby League.

   This archetype *anthro* trophy isn't a cup.

10. **Horse Racing Trophy.** Racing decanter, glass and sterling silver. Peter Gertler, gold and silversmith.

    Peter's work demonstrates the wisdom of commissioning trophies by leading craftsworkers.

11. **BHP Award for The Pursuit of Excellence.** BHP Australia.

    This award was designed by Michael Meszoros of Melbourne who told us he was given three weeks to design and produce it.

12. **ABC Sports Award of the Year.** Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

    Robert de Castella holds the award designed by Denis James.

13. **The W. G. Walkley Awards for Australian Journalism.** Ampol Ltd.

    The Walkley Awards are produced in bronze and gold plate and have been given since 1956. This style of *anthro* award is quite dated.

CRITICAL EYE

Critical Eye is a two-page feature intended to serve exhibiting craftspeople with criticism. ***Craft Australia*** *hopes to remedy some of the benign neglect our artists labour under. Each reviewer is restricted to 200 words per exhibition. If you think you would like to write for Critical Eye in your locality, please contact the Editor. We need more writers in WA, NT, Qld and Tasmania. Those readers with training in fine arts or critical theory are especially invited.*

STONE PAPER SCISSORS. *Graduating Printmakers and Ceramists. School of Art Gallery, Hobart. 13–20 December, 1984.*

The three ceramists exhibiting present vastly differing expressions of their craft.

Karen Hiller's group of large, slab-constructed figures, hanging from, and divided by, steel grids is strong and expressive, but Hiller has over-forced her intention by using the somewhat *cliché* images of burnt clay/skin and grids. Impact is further lessened by a series of wall-pieces whose cryptic messages are an unnecessary adjunct to the figures.

Sue Pedley's large, cheerfully loose vessels are almost human in stance. An accompanying group of smaller table figures and jar forms is, however, strongly derivative of earlier work, and would have been better left out altogether.

One criticism I have of the work of both Pedley and Hiller is their apparent need to over-elaborate; presenting supplementary work to 'back up' major pieces. It is those pieces which stand without extra description which are most successful, and indicate a greater understanding of both concept and its expression, on the part of the maker.

Susan Malm is a graduate of the Tasmanian School of Art (Ceramics Major) 1983, and a contributor to **Craft Tasmania.**

CRAFTS FOR CHRISTMAS. *Crafts Council of Tasmania Gallery, Hobart. 12 December – 11 January, 1985.*

The purpose of this annual exhibition is to present excellence in the crafts, with the intention of both raising the public's 'crafts awareness' and providing a venue for sale of quality work.

The majority of works, from a total of 32 craftspeople certainly fulfilled the primary purpose, with some exceptionally well-crafted and designed pieces from The Pot Company, Neil Vertigan (timber boxes) and David Shaw (framed mirrors).

Unfortunately, in some cases quality was undermined by small technical faults, and I formed the impression that some participants had made sacrifices in favour of small, un-exciting, highly saleable gift items. This was disappointing, especially as it applied to established craftspeople as well as the relatively inexperienced.

This exhibition could provide an opportunity for those working in 'fringe' crafts to exhibit. Jon Eiseman's pair of superbly carved whales, and Christine Forsyth's screen-printed cards and calendars were a pleasant surprise amongst the well-crafted but otherwise fairly predictable works. Perhaps in future *Crafts for Christmas* exhibitions accent might be more firmly placed on new works from well-known and emerging craftspeople.

Susan Malm

CERAMIC ACCESS WORKSHOP, *Upstairs Gallery, Australian Craftworks, 19 January – 2 February, 1985, Sydney.*

This show offers us the work of seven ceramists with the emphasis on diversity. Images of women and a humorous approach to functional objects are only two of the themes displayed.

Peter Giordano has produced teapots resembling oil cans with small bodies, elongated cylindrical spouts and round handles. Humour is the keynote of these pieces. Especially zany is one pot into the base of which a long drawer fits. They cleverly parody all the millions of boredom-inducing objects often associated with 'pottery'.

A wallpiece by Robyn Best consists of a pink cockatoo leaning over a fence with a blue sky in the background. It is a shame the verisimilitude of the ceramic cockatoo is not matched by the cream ceramic corrugated iron fence and the painted panel background. Rather than creating a *trompe-l'oeil* effect, this work has a naive quality.

Neville Assad's traditional Middle-Eastern style slender dark pots are swamped if not subverted by the other works such as the geometric patterned plates of Tingstad and the exciting colours and design of Maggie McCormick's 'Woman Series'.

Johanna Fischbein is a Sydney art historian.

FARE THEE WELL *Australian Craftworks, The Rocks, Sydney. 9 February–2 March*

This exhibition of tableware encompasses quite diverse offerings, their uniting theme being functionality. However their presentation as precious pieces in a gallery setting did little to bring them off the shelf and onto the kitchen table.

Of note were Steve Bowers' whimsical teapots, plates and mugs, a happy blend of patterns and Australian bird motifs. Julio Santos' range of bubble glassware appealed, as did Warren Langley's much more sculptural platters in smoky glass.

Art Déco fiends were satisfied with Valeska Campion's tea and coffee sets, rakishly angled to induce near vertigo. Not my cup of tea.

A fair selection of production pottery was on offer, most showing strong Japanese influence and bearing the simplest of design.

Despite its title, the direction of the show seemed uncertain to me. Not enough of a celebration of function, and yet not sufficient emphasis on the sculptural aspects.

Pam Thorne is a Sydney crafts enthusiast.

THE GRADUATE SHOW. *Northern Territory Museum. 15–25 November 1984.*

Most Top End ceramists' work belongs in the mainstream of Australian pottery. But Penny Wilde and Jan Chaloupka reflect a closer pre-occupation with this region. Both are graduates of the Ceramics Department of the Darwin Community College until recently headed by Vincent McGrath whose work also shows the impact of the Territory. This exhibition is the first from the BA, Fine Arts programme.

Penny Wilde's contribution to an individual style is in her use of an orange Darwin clay. This clay, in local *pisé* houses has a marble-like sheen. Penny uses it as a background to lively Mexican-style decoration. Her shaping of jugs, bowls, plates in this clay is simple and bold. However, some of the patterning is too careless and contrasts badly with the smooth orange surface.

Jan Chaloupka uses an ivory gritty clay with her fine and precise patterns. She says that 'my work . . . has developed through a re-interpretation of cultural heritage'.

Her brown and black designs show an absorption of Aboriginal patterning into her own style without any hint of pastiche. Dots and strokes, enclosed by black boundary lines are placed over the curving forms of bowls and vases in a Picasso-like manner. I hope she explores more shapes to host her flair for decoration.

Rosamund Griffiths is an art historian and museum professional in the Northern Territory.

KATE DURHAM, RAY TAYLOR
Craft Centre, South Yarra.

After having filed through thirty or so various craft enterprises, I have become increasingly suspicious of the term craft, when associated to the innumerable craftless items seen before my eyes.

What I have witnessed is the phenomenon *Australiana*, becoming a malignant growth upon the craft scene in Melbourne. I swear if I see another gumnut or eucalyptus-enshrined koala I'll scream.

With the tourist industry on an increasing high I see unlimited opportunities not only for financial gain, but more importantly a reputation for quality and creativity. However for this to occur, the individual craftsperson needs to re-evaluate his/her responsibilities, and elevate these wares to a standard of expert artisanry, rather than down to a price.

Despite the breaking down of barriers between the arts and the crafts, the majority of craftspeople seem to have ignored this by remaining safe within their past successful formulas. However in the odd high-brow boutique I've seen such an integration occur, with the mixed media pieces of jewellery by Kate Durham, and more recently at the Craft Centre in South Yarra, the exciting painterly quality of Ray Taylor's *raku* works.

Even though the element of money has been put to blame for the lack of creativity, I believe this has become more an accepted excuse, rather than a truism. Unimaginative thought is more likely to be the basis I believe.

Virginia Swan is a student in fine arts at RMIT.

MARIANNE COLE, *Scotchmer Gallery, Victoria. February 1985.*

So many beautiful and exciting ideas are available and often are displayed through craft materials. Why is it that one is constantly bombarded by pieces which are begging for public acceptance, instead of being totally honest in materials and techniques? If pots are not memories of ancient Grecian vessels in both form and colour, then they are purely ornamental, which in design are perfectly mundane.

Recent works by Marianne Cole unfortunately display just this. Her decorative pieces are obviously removed from the charm of country pottery homes and must stand up as individual exhibits. However the question of how can her pots possibly do so if the marvellously rich colours of cobalt blue and deep mustard and gold lustre are imprisoned, almost screaming out to be released from the conventional acceptable forms of ceramic pottery? These outstanding, almost garish colours, combined with the normality of traditional forms create an awkward combination.

Marianne Cole's recent trips to the far north of South Australia and Alice Springs have heavily influenced her pots. If only the harsh, coarse overwhelming warmth and vast space of these parts of Australia, could be interpreted right throughout her pots, not only in colour but in form and scale, then I believe the results may truly be tremendous.

Helena Torikov is a Fine Arts student at RMIT.

STEPHEN SKILLITZI. *Virtu Gallery, Brisbane. 3–23 February 1985.*

Skillitzi seems a bit like the old woman in the shoe, he has so many techniques he doesn't know what to do. The first impression is of total confusion, too much diversity of materials, ideas and format. A stained glass light table here, a traditional portrait bust there, plates behind and games in front. Overriding all is a feeling of a frenetic worker whose ideas come thicker and faster than can be coped with. Unnerving for the audience is the myriad of complex statements amongst this.

On review, a sense of power play, gamesmanship and humour surface. With the games, the most compelling pieces, he leads us to play, to comment and wonder. Miniature political and ecological vignettes concerned with extinction and nuclear destruction. This Svengali is playing with himself, us and the materials.

The *Ecology Game* features several pieces with columns of deep blue glass swirled with metallic patina. These support clear glass discs with simple reliefs of jelly 'blubbers', turtles, shark and man, in my opinion the most successful piece showing the maker's delightful execution and his challenging invitation for us to play.

On conclusion let us return to that unfortunate woman in the shoe who also should have remembered sometimes 'less is best'.

Stephanie Outridge Field is a Queensland potter.

STRATHPINE POTTERS *The Potters' Gallery. February 1985.*

Potters: Shirley Reyner; Pat Gray; Yvonne Darker; Ian Primrose; Dianne More; Ben Wiringa, and Peter Bray (of Thorndon Pottery).

This exhibition along with the development of the Strathpine group itself could be a 'History of Australian Pottery Post 60s'. These potters have talked their local council into a home at 'Cowbails' in the North Pine Country Park (to become a historical village). They offer each other and the community instruction and exposure to pots. There's energy and support and not too bad a standard, although each style represented in this exhibition has been surpassed by other Queensland potters already. Which leads me to feel it was really more 'display' than 'exhibition'.

Peter Bray was the most adventuresome with wheel thrown forms and glazes (celadon). There was a lot of leafy decoration about, both spray resist and painted, as well as raised additions (*Herb Tea*, etc.). While the public falls all over itself for this sort of thing, I'd have preferred the lovely, simple shapes left alone, particularly with the wood-fired ware.

Primrose and More do handbuilt forms, 'colourful characters' for the former, rustic huts for the latter; and they do them well. The only problem was that in seeing them *en masse* you realise how repetitious they are. The competence is there; imaginations need extending.

I'd like to have seen Yvonne Darker's handbuilt 'Seascape' forms underwater. As is the case with many of our underwater friends, they can lose their magic on dry land.

Janet De Boer is an Editor and craftswoman.

TAPESTRIES: KUSHA BOLT *The Solander Gallery, Yarralumla ACT.* 9–25 November 1984.

Technically Kusha Bolt's wall hangings recently exhibited at the Solander Gallery showed an exacting precision in weaving. A strong predilection for geometric design was evident in most of the works, which would hang comfortably on the walls of modern architecture.

Yin Yang used four representations of the motif, each set within its own space, delineated by a fine red line. Woven in natural fibres the drift of colours within the grey tones blended easily with the odd appearance of brown. This tonal gradation did in fact soften the starkness of the precision of the design. Other hangings such as *Four Boxes* and *Four Windows* introduced fields of bright colour, dovetailed with exactness. Here there was no intention to depart from strict geometric construction, nor to imply a world beyond the four walls of the boxes, nor through the windows. *Reflections* showed a different concept. Freer reign was given to creative impulse in the design and the colours reverted to more naturalistic tones. As before, the design is repeated, however this time each repetition is closer and more intimate than the preceding one. Depicted in strip like scenes, the three sequences are strung together by horizontal bands which break the foreground into Kusha Bolt's favourite geometrical designs. Though the island moves into closer perspective, it does not become more detailed; no revelation is made of the island as either location or abode.

The incongruities in the concept of reflection *vis-a-vis* geometry remain unresolved. Rather this is a reflection of tranquillity and passivity juxtaposed against the angularity of modernity.

Sue Flutter is currently researching an Honours Thesis at the Department of Fine Arts, ANU, Canberra.

ABORIGINAL WOMEN'S ART FESTIVAL. *Adelaide Festival Centre, February 1–16 1985.*

How can a reviewer adequately 'evaluate' Aboriginal 'arts' with encumbrances of European notions about art? For white Australia there is, in fact, such a phenomenon (even if none of us can actually agree to what it is!). Within traditional Aboriginal society, art as a *separate* activity, apart from everyday life, has no meaning. So then, how do we approach something calling itself the first *Aboriginal Women's Art Festival* which demands response, occupying as it did almost the entire environs of the Festival Centre?

Well, not withstanding some white guilt, perhaps a little confusion at the Aboriginal use of the term 'art', some curiosity and certainly real interest in what was advertised, I went along. To my joy, it was not merely a 'museum' art show emphasizing tribal culture alone; it

continued on p. 117

Crafts Council Calendar

Western Australia

1st Floor, Perth City Railway Station,
Wellington Street, Perth, 6000
Tel: 327 2799

29 May–23 June. Country Contingent. Country members exhibiting their work.

31 May–14 June. Perth Building Society. Western Australia Week Exhibition.

25 July–11 August. Youth Exhibition. Craftspeople 25 or under exhibiting their work.

14 August–9 September. Tutors Exhibition. Tutors from Western Australian colleges.

21 August–11 September. City of Perth Craft Awards. Major exhibition to be held in Allandale Square.

Australian Capital Territory

1 Aspinal Street, Watson, 2602
Tel: 41 2373

19 June–7 July. Elements of Change. Crafts Council members exhibition.

12–14 July. Conference. *Surviving as a Craftsperson in the Real World*. A national conference for emerging craftspeople.

12–21 July. Jeff Mincham's ceramics.

25 July–18 August. Tamworth Fibre Collection.

28 August–15 September. An Invitational Exhibition.

24 September–13 October. The Kimono Show.

Queensland

School of Arts Building, 166 Ann Street, Brisbane, 4000
Tel: 229 2661

20 July. Arts Law — Selling Your Work. Shane Simpson.

New South Wales

100 George Street, The Rocks, Sydney, 2000
Tel: 279 126

28 May-24 November. *Evolution of Style:* A six month exposé of contemporary Australian decorative arts which seeks to identify and explore historical sources and the contemporary expressions of the decorative spirit. This is a major selling exhibition. A 'Looking At' focus series will be presented in six parts: The Material Truth, Australian Motif, Environmental Concerns, The Ornamental Spirit, Post Modern; Post Bauhaus, Post Modern; The Patterned Edge.

Portable Craft Series 2. 'Basketry and Beyond' and 'Looking at Leather' will be travelling to regional areas of NSW. Contact the Crafts Council of NSW for details.

Goulburn Regional Art Gallery 2 July-14 August (touring Goulburn region)
Albury Regional Art Gallery 17 August-31 September (touring Albury region)

'Through the Looking Glass', Crafts Council of NSW travelling exhibition of stained glass panels:

Tamworth City Art Gallery 26 June-9 July
Broken Hill City Art Gallery 24 July-6 August, 21 August-3 September
Albury Regional Art Gallery 18 September-1 October

Tasmania

77 Salamanca Place, Hobart, 7000
Tel: 23 5622

3–23 June. Aboriginal batik *Utopia*.

Planned July. Michael Glover. Creative knitting workshop.

1–19 July. Robyn Gordon jewellery. Queen Victoria travelling exhibition.

August. Robin Hill workshop in leather.

July/August. Fibre wearable exhibition.

July/August. Exhibition and fashion parade of winter collection.

September. Basketry '85 workshop and exhibition.

Northern Territory

Bullocky Point, Fannie Bay, 5790
Tel: 81 6615, 81 6616

June. Sandra Black. Porcelain and bone china workshop. Alice Springs 14, 15, 16 June. Darwin 21, 22, 23 June.

June. Solvig Bass Becking. Rug weaving workshop. Alice Springs 14, 15, 16 June.

26 July-11 August. *National Crafts Acquisition Award Exhibition.* Annual national acquisitive award exhibition conducted jointly by the Museum and Art Galleries of the NT and the Crafts Council of the NT.

August. Inga Hunter. Embroidery and handmade paper workshop. Katherine 2, 3 August. New approaches to batik workshop. Katherine 4, 5 August.

August. Anne Berney. Sculptural fibres workshop. Alice Springs.

September. Monnie Senner. Advanced spinning workshop. Alice Springs 6, 7, 8 September.

September. Penny Amberg. Leather workshop. Darwin 20, 21, 22 September.

South Australia

169 Payneham Road, St Peters, 5069
Tel: 42 4001

Venues and dates not yet finalised. Travelling Suitcase Exhibitions, which include: Stitch in Pine, Bend Belly and Shoulder, To Whom It May Concern.

August/September. Royal Adelaide Show. Crafts Council stand in the Keith Angas Building.

Victoria

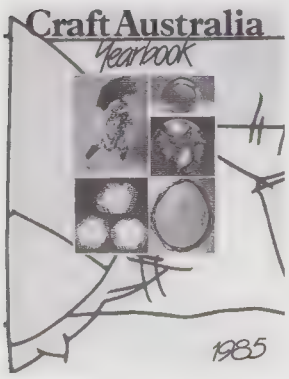
7 Blackwood Street, North Melbourne, 3051
Tel: 329 8856, 329 8719

18 June–21 July. Form and Function '85.

18 November–8 December. The English Speaking Union Stuart Devlin Award.

Books

Susan Thompson
Reviews Coordinator



Craft Australia Yearbook 1985
Crafts Council of Australia.
1985. 100 pages. Full Colour.
Indexed. $19.50 Soft Cover.

This is ***Craft Australia***'s second Yearbook and it takes a slightly different approach from the first one. The Yearbook focuses on five especially healthy art forms and provides thoughtful essays on each:

Art Clothing and Accessories, Beth Hatton;
Architectural Stained Glass, Jenny Zimmer;
Contemporary Lace, Rosemary Parkin;
Functional Ceramics, Janet Mansfield;
Enamelling, Michael Bogle.

This Yearbook uses full colour throughout and by extensive research, it presents a lot of crafts never before published. This is especially true of clothing and enamels.

The use of colour throughout and glossy paper makes the soft cover Yearbook seem a much more expensive volume than $19.50 would suggest.

Craft Australia readers will want to collect this volume to keep abreast of the rapidly evolving crafts scene and part-time craftspeople will use the 1985 Yearbook for inspiration and ideas.

Michael Bogle.

The Culture Club: Crisis in the Arts is one of the few books to address the issues of funding in the arts. The book deals with British attitudes and approaches to arts funding. Because Australian arts organisations are so closely patterned on the British model, ***Craft Australia*** was anxious to have the book reviewed.

Mr J. S. Dawkins, the Commonwealth Minister for Trade was asked for a review of the book following his expressions of interest in the arts funding debate at an opening at the Art Gallery of NSW. **Ms Di Yerbury**, the General Manager of the Australia Council was also asked for her comments. Their views of **The Culture Club** are printed below.

The Culture Club: Crisis in the Arts
Brian Appleyard.
Faber & Faber. 1984
128 pp $7.95

J. S. Dawkins

This book was sent to me following some remarks I made at an exhibition that was opening in one of our most prestigious art institutions.

I can appreciate the sense of humour of the editor who forwarded it for review after I had ringingly endorsed the notion of government funding of the arts and also expressed the view that governments should actively review arts funding to ensure it is not directed to the safe or to encourage the mediocre. Continuous review should not confine itself merely to the quantum of funds but to ensuring that, without excellence being sacrificed, the conservative and non-controversial are not the sole or major recipients of support.

This short and very polemical book is utterly at odds with the view that government funding of the arts, at least in the form in which it occurs in Britain, is of any value.

(It is not against funding in some form. It talks approvingly of the private support, separate from corporate sponsorship, and of the tax incentives that allegedly underpin much activity in the arts in the USA.)

But basically it returns again and again to the view that the formal system of support and patronage and those misguided souls who work as administrators in these areas, produce nothing of value and nothing of interest. It goes a long way past my own view that in Australia we run the risk of over-complicating our network of support, and as a consequence place too much control in the hands of cautious bureaucrats often biased towards a particular *cliché*.

Brian Appleyard's views are much more trenchant. One must seriously wonder whether this is a pamphlet designed solely to earn the condonation of the Thatcher Government. It seems that Appleyard is basically against the second half of the twentieth century.

He doesn't like most of what passes for or is accepted as art today.

He doesn't like the bureaucracies that have sprung up to deliver government support.

He doesn't like how, contrary to his views, these things have been accepted (uncritically) by politicians and the people.

His notion of art is however a little difficult to discover, though he does praise the Modernist school and has kind words to say about Beckett, Tarkovsky, Ashbery, Frank O'Hara, Mondrian and Alban Berg's Lulu, (while ripping into the Royal Opera production of the last mentioned). There is however much that he doesn't like about today's art, particularly that art designed to encourage values and art that contains a political polemic.

Certainly he would not be pleased with any idea of art and artists being supported in such a way that they challenge and excite a grey, tedious social and political landscape. Equally he would appear to be not at all interested in one of my preferences in arts funding. I have argued that a greater proportion of funds should be directed towards those in Australia who are at present lacking in the power and capacity to achieve. These people are seemingly excluded from the funding process and as a result have lost self-esteem and faith in themselves to be creative and to make some impact on society.

In fact, while Appleyard tells us that much should not be considered as art, it is only on the fourth from last page that he finally comes up with his definition of art 'as the highest attainment of the human imagination'.

Then he tells us that he cannot reconcile his definition with 'street theatres, craft workshops, Covent Garden or the National Theatre'. For most people, that is a breathtakingly narrow view.

All this comes from a man whose profession is Deputy Arts Editor of **The Times,** after five formative years as a financial journalist. It would seem to suggest one conclusion. All that venom, all that bile, with not a little character assassination thrown in and all that assertion about what is wrong may lead his employer to think of moving him to aerospace or textiles industries editor where he may be assured that here too he will discover 'a similar chaos of misunderstandings, tentative connections, obligations and associations'. That is the nature of today and the nature of the mixed economy in the welfare state. Mrs Thatcher has not yet managed to close it down.

Finally though, this book is provocative and lucid. It does argue on a subject that probably only a few in Britain believe worth bothering with, that is, whether the state should support the arts at all. Having run through the argument I find it a barren one but it has the virtue at least of focusing minds on the issue that follows; the direction of such support and the means needed to ensure it is reaching those who can use it effectively.

J. S. Dawkins. J .S. Dawkins is Minister for Trade in the Hawke Government. At the time he was invited to submit this review he was Minister for Finance.

See book coupons inside the back cover

The Culture Club: Crisis in the Arts

Di Yerbury and Margaret Wallace

'Nobody should experience anything they don't need to. If they don't need poetry, bully for them.'

So ends **The Culture Club,** with a quotation that typifies Appleyard's challenging attitude to the arts and their organisational paraphernalia. The book is guaranteed to exasperate, if not enrage, almost everyone associated with the arts; yet in spite of its flaws it makes stimulating reading. Appleyard sets out to shatter many of our most cherished beliefs, and in the process, forces us to re-examine what we, in the arts, are doing and why.

Writing about the arts in Britain, he attacks the Culture Club, the 'select and secretive Committees' which try to plan for art. Not only is it impossible to plan for art, according to Appleyard, it is also harmful. Arts funding, he asserts, is justified by various spurious and self-serving arguments, in particular by the view that art is somehow indefinably different from other human activity. As a result of this, art is now obliged to justify itself (and its funding) by appearing worthwhile and beneficial.

Appleyard's hope for the future is that art will free itself from these burdens, that it will no longer be considered as mysteriously different, nor will it be required to do people good. Without the idea of art as 'different', he claims, there will be no need for the Culture Club, which is after all merely a product of the need to believe in the difference of art. Art will become just another form of leisure activity.

Before arriving at this conclusion, Appleyard looks at changing attitudes to the arts in the 19th and 20th centuries, and sketches what he sees as the negative effects on the arts of various social movements. He considers the economics of the arts, and gives a fascinating but vicious picture of Britain's art mandarins.

The book's most serious flaw is its failure to provide convincing evidence for its assertions. It is, as the author admits, 'a highly partial and prejudiced survey', journalistic rather than scholarly, and many of its conclusions are questionable.

To what extent does subsidy produce the 'worthy' and 'relevant' art that Appleyard so despises? The answer is that we simply do not know. We can say, though, that worthy and relevant art has often been produced without subsidy; Picasso's *Guernica,* Ibsen's *Doll's House,* Orwell's *1984* and *Midnight Oil*'s music are some well-known examples. In the present economic climate, it is very difficult for minority forms of art and especially art that questions established values, to survive at all without subsidy.

Appleyard's chapter on the economics of the arts is disappointing. It contains hardly any figures, and Appleyard lays the blame squarely on the arts: 'There is a prodigious level of statistical ignorance in the arts industry.' He concludes that the arts are unprecedentedly wealthy and are likely to become more so. Others would disagree with his conclusion. Sir Claus Moser, Chairman of the Royal Opera House Board, recently painted a dismal picture of funding cuts in Holland, Germany and Britain, and of the financial difficulties suffered by *La Scala* and the Met. Closer to home, we have the evidence of **The Artist in Australia Today** that artists' average arts-related income in 1981-82 was around $10,000. So much for 'unprecedented wealth' in the arts.

Another weakness in the book is Appleyard's unrelenting negativity. He is very clear about what he does not like, but vague in the extreme about what might replace it. He obviously values minority art-forms and admits that without funding, many of them would cease to exist. Yet at the same time he appears to reject not only the present arts funding system, but the philosophical basis for any arts funding. And even if we were able to agree that, as Appleyard argues, art is just another leisure activity, we need not necessarily conclude that arts funding is unjustified; after all, the arts make a significant contribution to a nation's economy and are just as worthy of subsidy as other leisure or communications activities such as sport, radio and television. No doubt Appleyard would be interested in the recent findings of David Throsby and Glenn Withers that: 'the vast majority of people (in Australia) . . . perceive the existence of general community benefits from the arts . . . The public is willing to support the present arts structure to at least two or three times the present level of funding'.

What then, is the value of the book to us in Australia? Although Appleyard does not provide us with answers, his keen intuitive sense enables him to diagnose problems in the arts and to ask questions that merit serious consideration. Apart from the perennial questions of what, if anything, should be funded, and how, and why, there are the intriguing parallels between Britain and Australia. For example, both countries have experienced affluence followed by a recession, with severe effects on the arts; in both countries there has been questioning of the role of the central funding body, and of its 'arm's length' relationship to government; and in both countries there has been an expansion in the electronic media, which will no doubt have a major long-term effect on the arts.
The Australia Council is now preparing a Strategic Plan for the next decade, and in the process will reassess its role and its priorities. The Council will address many of the issues raised in Appleyard's book, and will seek to involve a wide cross-section of the arts community in the development of the plan, through journals such as ***Craft Australia*** that offer a channel for communication with artists. It is hoped that in this way we will be able to develop a more positive, cohesive and constructive approach to the problems that afflict arts funding both in Australia, and as Appleyard shows, in Britain.

For all its weaknesses, **The Culture Club** is readable, lively, and provocative. It may not give us the answers, or change our beliefs, but it will certainly make us re-evaluate them; and constant re-evaluation is essential if we are to avoid complacency and stagnation.

Di Yerbury is the General Manager of the Australia Council. **Margaret Wallace** is the Council's Policy Officer. The views expressed in this review are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Australia Council.

Craft in Australia Allan Moult. Reed Books, 1984 192 pages, $29.95

Photographs which show the dried clay on Gwyn Hanssen Pigott's fingernail, Harold Hughan treading firmly up from his pottery, and Gay Hawkes, the 'feral woodie', plane in hand, geranium pinned to her overalls, assertively looking out from the page, are the pleasures of this book. The text too, which consists mostly of *verbatim* interviews, has some delightful insights to share with the reader, who could resist reading further the entry that begins, 'Annemieke Mein has a deep-freezer full of little birds individually wrapped in plastic bags'!

Allan Moult as writer and photographer has compiled a worthwhile addition to the ever-growing number of books devoted to various aspects of craft in Australia. Among numerous monographs and specialist books of all kinds **Craft in Australia** provides a sensitive and perceptive look at the lives of 34 artists working in Australia in clay, wood, leather, fibre, metal and glass. It is a pleasure to gain, through photographs and text, an idea of the aims and lifestyle of each artist, something seldom achieved in more academic books, and to see how often especially Australian qualities and characteristics are revealed.

Although in his introduction Allan Moult says 'The choice of participating craftsmen and women was an extremely personal choice. It is not a judgement.' He also says, 'It embraces a huge cross-section of the Australian crafts movement and tries to faithfully reflect the overall view of craft in this country today.' There is something of a contradiction in these statements for in exercising his personal choice Allan Moult has omitted any artists from either the A.C.T. or the

Northern Territory and gives space to only one West Australian. At the same time he has restricted his choice of potters to those producing functional forms, fibre artists to those weaving and sewing, and metalworkers to those who are jewellers. The omission of potters producing non-functional work, artists printing, dyeing and painting fabric, metalsmiths making objects other than jewellery, and the total omission of artists working in media such as basketry and book binding, to name two recently rehabilitated crafts, undermine the latter claim of the representational nature of the book. The very conservative nature of the choice of potter and fibre artist contrasts starkly with the more evenly balanced selection in the chapters devoted to wood and glass. The book would have benefited from the inclusion of younger generation artists and a few older radicals.

As much as I enjoyed the inclusion of entries for John Ferwerda, violin-maker, and Nick Masterman, boat-builder, they seemed a little out of place without the support of similar artist/artisan entries in other areas. In breaking down areas of definition the book may have included other traditional skills. Over the years ***Craft Australia*** has looked at various skills traditionally practised by women — preserving, cake-decorating, lace-making, etc. There are many particular skills practised by migrants that might also be considered. Perhaps this suggests another book, or books. I hope so, and I hope that Allan Moult will go on to produce them.

Craft in Australia is an interesting and worthwhile book. It provides us with valuable and often potent insights into the work and lives of many artists today. My only cry is for **more**!

John McPhee. John is the Curator, Australian Decorative Arts at the Australian National Gallery, Canberra.

Costume in Australia, 1798–1902 Marion Fletcher. Oxford University Press. 1984. 208 pp. $45.00

This lavishly-illustrated and well-produced book has been written by Marion Fletcher, who for many years was the curator in charge of Costume and Textiles at the National

Gallery of Victoria. There are eleven chapters, each devoted roughly to a decade; a useful glossary of fabric and costume terms; a mixed index allowing the reader to check quotations as well as to research types of costume; a bibliography and a list of recommended reading. The illustrations, some in colour, are drawn from a wide variety of sources, including Australian fashion journals, weekly newspapers, contemporary photographs, prints and paintings. The quality of the reproductions is very high, and they are well-placed throughout the book.

The author has used some little-known sources with good effect. Extracts from letters and diaries, contemporary accounts of Australia written for the European market, and newspaper advertisements have been used to highlight preoccupations, attitudes and the availability of fashions. Male, female, and children's fashions are considered, although maternity clothes, underclothing, and accessories are scarcely discussed. As well as detailed descriptions of the changes in fashion during the period, the book gives some information about importers and manufacturers of clothing in Sydney and Melbourne and in the process illuminates aspects of trade and popular taste in those cities.

The contemporary comments about fashions are most useful. However, these are mostly written to compare Australian fashions with those in Europe, generally to the disadvantage of the 'colonials'. The author seems often to accept them at face value, and her use of the sources encourages in the reader a form of 'cultural cringe'.

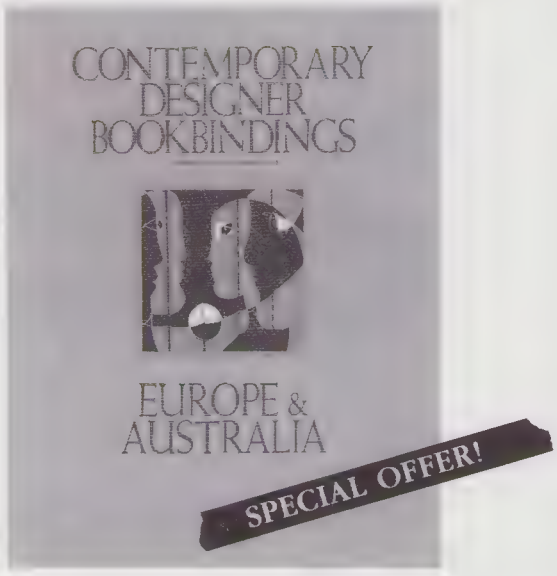
The Europe-centred tone is one of the shortcomings of the book. Especially for the latest period, the Australian clothing discussed is largely 'high fashion': the clothes of the wealthy, society leaders, and the most fashionable. The clothes are always described with an eye to what was happening in Britain at the same time.

This is disappointing in an author who has had access to costume collections, not only of the National Gallery and the National Trust of Victoria, but also of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences and the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. These collections could have been used to answer some peculiarly 'Australian' questions.

Some of these are obvious. What adaptation, if any, did Australians make to the extremes of climate they faced? Are Australian-worn summer clothes generally of a lighter material than their European counterparts? What kinds of cloth were produced or sold in Australia? What Australian modifications of style were there? Were fewer undergarments worn by Australian women? How widespread was the practice among pioneer women of wearing only a petticoat or a shift around the house in summer? If the author is right in her implied assumption that adaptations were only made by country dwellers or 'provincial' people, what does this say about the intelligence of the wealthy town dweller in Australia?!

Perhaps the existing costume collections are weighted too heavily towards high fashion, and do not allow us to answer such questions easily. An essay on the value of these collections as research tools would have added to the book's value. I was also disappointed to note that there is only one colour photograph of a surviving piece of costume. Colour photographs give impressions of colour, texture and style, while black and white contemporary studio photographs, prints, or drawings do not.

Because there is not sufficient attention to everyday dress, and only rare reference to surviving examples of Australian costume, the book is only an introduction to the topic. Many more questions need to be answered. Too rarely does the author distinguish between what fashion dictated and what was actually worn by nineteenth century Australians. The author shows no familiarity with recent work on Australian women's history, and in many



Contemporary Designer Bookbinding

This is the first nation-wide survey of Australian designer bookbindings ever assembled. The colour catalogue also includes new European bookbinding brought to Australia especially for exhibition.

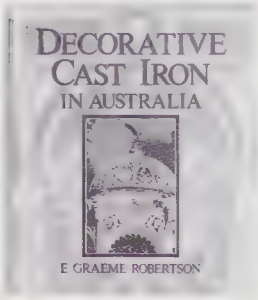
This full colour designer award-winning publication is available to *Craft Australia* subscribers for only $5.50 (including postage). Please order by using the coupon at the back of the magazine.

[Shops and galleries interested in wholesale of this catalogue, please contact the magazine.]

ways this is a story without an Australian context. Yet, for the museum curator with a costume collection, the book is a useful reference tool about the minutiae of style in Australian 'high society'.

Elizabeth Willis. Elizabeth is an historian at the Museum of Victoria, Melbourne.

This review is taken from **Muse News**, December 1984.



Decorative Cast Iron in Australia E. Graeme Robertson, compiled by Joan Robertson. Currey O'Neill Ross, 1984. 238 pages, illustrated, bibliography, glossary, index. $39.95.

E. Graeme Robertson was a distinguished neurologist who was also President of the National Gallery Society of Victoria and an Honorary Member of the National Trust of Australia. His photography led him to a deep interest in the ornamental cast iron that is a feature of the Victorian architecture of Australia's older cities. In the 1950s, increasingly alarmed at the cast iron lost as old buildings were modernised or demolished, he decided to make a photographic record of the best examples he could find. He also wanted to publish it in an attempt to make the general public aware of their threatened heritage. His search took him into the oldest parts of the cities and suburbs, photographing not only significant public buildings and private homes but also less common subjects such as early shopping centres, drinking fountains and park railings. The result was a series of books beginning with 'Victorian Heritage' in 1960 and ending with this one, compiled by his daughter.

This book is made up of extracts from the earlier classic works which are nearly all out of print. There is, in addition, a small amount of unpublished material included. Photographs form the main part of the book, along with a brief text outlining such matters as the technical differences between cast and wrought iron, the history of its use as an architectural feature, the origin of designs and patterns, its lesser-known uses (such as in portable buildings) and notes on some of the foundries that produced it. There is a glossary of descriptive terms, a long bibliography and a list of catalogues from nineteenth and early twentieth century foundries.

But it is primarily a book of photographs, all of them of high quality and reproduced in black and white to enhance the *chiaroscuro* so much a part of cast iron's aesthetic appeal. The plates are arranged in sections, one for each of the mainland state capitals and one for all Tasmania. There is a final chapter on detail. In the section on Sydney, the inclusion of some very early photographs of The Rocks along with some taken just over twenty years ago provides glimpses of this area over a century. Brisbane and Perth are not nearly so well represented as Dr Robertson's death in 1975 cut short his preparations for individual books dealing with those cities.

The author's patient scholarship and research are revealed in the detailed captions accompanying each photograph. Not only are the subjects precisely identified and their locations described, but specific features of the iron are noted along with comments on the probable origin of the design and where other examples of it have been sighted.

This is a beautiful book which appeals in many ways, as a collection of fine photographs, as an appreciation of a memorable style of architecture and as a celebration of Australia's past and present. It should find an audience in those whose enthusiasm for our traditions is new and who might have missed Dr. Robertson's earlier books as they appeared. A number of the buildings photographed twenty years ago did not escape the demolisher's hammer. Hopefully those that remain now have the protection of a wider public appreciation. Much of the credit for this must go to E. Graeme Robertson and the crusade he began thirty years ago with discernment, energy and skill.

Wilma Garnett. Wilma is a librarian with the Crafts Council of Australia.

An Introduction to Basic Knifemaking. W J Tarplee. Australasian Survival Enterprises. $5.95
PO Box 11 Dickson, ACT.

Ever since I became interested in custom knifemaking I have read every book that I could get my hands on. Almost all of these books have been written by Americans for the American maker, listing materials and tools available only from American suppliers. It is refreshing to see a publication by an Australian. **An Introduction to Basic Knifemaking** by W J Tarplee is aimed at the beginner who has no or little metal-working experience, and is written in a style that is easy to read. The book is laid out step by step, from the tools required to sharpening the finished knife. The materials used could be found in most homes, and if not they can be easily obtained. The tools are basic hand tools which most people would have. Mr Tarplee has avoided the use of power machines such as belt grinders and buffs that can be dangerous if not used properly. Of all the steps in knifemaking heat treating is perhaps the most critical, hardening and tempering of the knife blade can make it a useful tool or a total waste of time. Most custom knifemakers send their blades to a commercial heat treater rather than do them themselves. The method suggested by Mr Tarplee for doing this job is crude but effective for the type of steel used in the book, particularly for people in the country who have no access to commercial heat treaters. I believe that if I had this publication when I first started making knives I would have progressed much faster than I have. I would recommend this book to anyone who is thinking of taking up this fascinating hobby.

Peter Brown. Peter is a custom knifemaker from Ryde in Sydney.

A Woman's Touch, Women in Design from 1880 to the Present Day. Isabelle Anscombe, Virago Press, 1984. 216 pages, 8 colour plates, select bibliography. $20.95.

Isabelle Anscombe has a M.A. degree in English from Newnham College, Cambridge, UK. She is a freelance journalist with extensive experience in the antiques and crafts areas.

This comprehensive book traces the contribution that women made to the development of the crafts movements in England, United States, Russia, Germany and France, covering a period from the 1860s to the end of the Second World War. The introduction defines the scope

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of the book as concentrating on women designers who have contributed to the modern house and its furnishings. Specifically excluded are architecture and the fine arts, fashion and jewellery design.

Researching the history of the crafts presents many problems to the investigator. The primary sources consist of the craft object, that, more often than not, has ceased to exist. Therefore, the researcher is dependent on published secondary sources. These are not noted for their impartiality or comprehensiveness and women are the first casualty. Isabelle Anscombe recognised this problem when she stated that women's achievements were overlooked, not only because of prejudice against them, but also because the design literature emphasised theoretical writings rather than the actual craft object. A perusal of her sources confirms this problem. Therefore any assessment of women in the crafts, no matter how well-researched, can only scratch the surface of their massive contribution to the development of the crafts movement. The majority of craftswomen are doomed to anonymity as there are no surviving records of their work.

Anscombe accounts for the success of prominent craftswomen in England due to the fact that they worked under the aegis of husbands and male relatives. She argues that it was this access to training that enabled women to overcome the spectre of amateurism. In contrast she relates how women in the USA adopted much more independent attitudes as they were not bound by long-standing English and European conventions. The American craftswomen demonstrated that they were technically innovative as well as proving their worth in the market place. The author claims that individual women in the USA paved the way for their antecedents, whereas in Britain the development of art schools provided the foundations for careers for women. The author also evaluates the work of the *bauhaus* in Germany, in particular, the work of the women who specialised in textiles. The most interesting point to emerge from the school of textiles was amalgamation of the artist with the craftsperson, which resulted in the concept of the designer who was neither male nor female and who remained anonymous. This anonymity provides an interesting contrast with the so called 'fine arts' which elevates the work of individuals to the point where the art they produce is of secondary consideration.

The author traces how the concept of home decoration provided career opportunities for women. The inevitable link between women and domesticity provided an acceptable cover for the many craftswomen who established successful and innovative careers that challenged their male peers. To illustrate her thesis, Anscombe draws on the biographies of many prominent craftswomen. A smattering of these women are May Morris, Gertrude Jeckyll, Margaret Macdonald (England); Candace Wheeler, Adelaide Alsop (USA); Natalia Goncharova, Varvara Stepanova (Russia); Vally Weiselthier (Austria); Sonia Delaunay, Marie Laurencin (France); and Gunta Stadler-Stozl (Germany).

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The author traces the development of the crafts movement through the revival of the 1920s that espoused the values of the 'simple life' and how this movement provided the roots for the back-to-the-land movement of the 1960s. She accounts for the effects that industrialisation had on the crafts movement and how women were in the forefront of this development. Her analysis finishes after the Second World War. The author concludes her book by claiming that women are playing a game they cannot win because they have no say in laying down the rules.

She maintains and rightly so, that '. . . as long as women remain outside the economic and ideological structures which effectively control the organisation of society, they can only voice their protest from outside those structures, never practise it from within'. Depressing conclusion maybe, but a competent analysis of women in the crafts. This book is recommended reading for all craftspeople, particularly for those who graduate from the practice of their craft to join the hierarchies of those who make the rules that exclude women from the main action.

Caroline Ambrus. Caroline is the author of **The Ladies' Picture Show, sources of a century of Australia women artists**, Hale and Iremonger, 1984, and an artist and printmaker in the ACT.

Books Received

The Hawaiian Shirt
Thomas Steele
Thames & Hudson
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Scandinavian Knitwear
Alice Starmore
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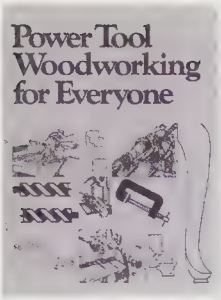


Power Tool Woodworking for Everyone R J DeCristoforo. Reston Publishing 370 pages $28.50

My first impression of this book was not favourable because of the inaccurate and rather confused drawings on the front cover. However this was not typical of the standard of the text within which is amply supported by many clear photographs and accurate and well-drawn diagrams.

It is perhaps unfortunate that the title conveys the impression that a reader could expect to receive comprehensive general instruction in the use of woodworking power tools. It is in fact a detailed manual for operators of a Shopsmith Mark V Combination Woodworking Machine. If the reader is prepared to gloss over the 'P.R. blurb' and the not inconsiderable detail applicable only to that particular machine, there is much information and instruction which applies to general power tool operation. But it would be dishonest of me to give the potential buyer the impression that this is the major benefit to be derived from a reading of this book.

Being a book written and published in the USA, there are many words, terms and phrases that are particular to that country though none that I have found would be incomprehensible to anyone with a mediocre knowledge of woodworking. The other major factor is of course the use of imperial measurements which are becoming less familiar to the younger generation. How much is 58 inches in metric measurement, or 3/64's of an inch?

The book is well set out and easily readable in three columns per page with photographs and diagrams clearly captioned and placed in close proximity to the text referring to the point they illustrate. At a recommended retail price of $28.50 it is reasonable value. My conclusion is that this book is not for the beginner looking for general instruction in woodworking power tool operation. There are other books which provide this much better, such as Alf Martensen's **The Woodworker's Bible** which has sections devoted to various types of power tools.

Power Tool Woodworking for Everyone should perhaps be titled 'Power Tool Woodworking for Everyone who operates a Shopsmith Mark V Combination Machine'. It would be, to my mind, most beneficial to the operators of that machine but does also provide some useful, instructional tips to the more advanced semi-professional, or certainly capable, amateur woodworker desirous of complementing his or her knowledge of the craft.

Richard Crosland. Richard is a custom furniture maker and woodwork teacher. He formerly taught cabinetmaking at Sydney Technical College.

Japanese Woodworking Tools: Their Traditions, Spirit and Use Toshio Odate, Taunton Press 1984, 189 Pages, 102 B & W photographs, line drawings. $22.95

Traditional Japanese woodworking tools differ in many ways from those developed in the West, and must not be confused with the mass production tools found in hardware stores, marked 'Made in Japan', though the esteem of that label has risen rapidly in recent years.

We are looking, here, at something quite different; the indigenous Japanese woodworking tools.

The West has yet barely discovered these tools and the Japanese have never really tried to market them and, it would seem, have failed to take advantage of the fact that their own system is in many ways superior to the broadly used Western one.

Japanese planes and saws cut on the 'pull' stroke rather than the 'push' stroke; in other words they cut toward the user not away as in Western style.

In Japan, as anywhere, there are fascimiles and the real thing. The real thing in this case is the quality of tool used by the Japanese craftsperson.

The author Toshio Odate learned about woodworking tools in his native Japan. He was an apprentice *Tategushi* (sliding-door maker) in the old traditional hand tool method. In 1958 he moved to the United States and has since conducted numerous workshops on the use of Japanese Woodworking Tools, until recently unknown outside of Japan.

Japanese woodworking tools are very distinctive, often unique, and are made by skilled workers to be used by other skilled artisans to produce the finest work.

This book will be of great value to anyone who is at all interested in the culture and history of Japan, and its tradition of fine craftmanship but especially those who are interested in the finer points of working with wood and hand tools. This is probably the first book, published in English which goes into great depth on the subject.

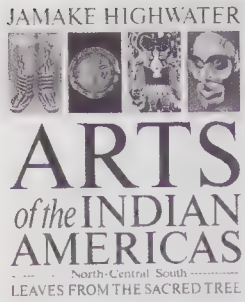
Odate covers the subtle technicalities more thoroughly than most woodworking books: How to prepare and 'fine tune' the tools. How to sharpen and maintain them and the finer points of using them in various situations. (Many of these 'tricks of the trade' will be an eye-opener to any aspiring woodworker and can often be applied equally well to Western tools.)

Along with the excellent technical drawings illustrating the tools, each chapter is filled out with the history, philosophy and attitude of the Japanese craftsperson.

Without a Japanese master the Western woodworker who acquires some of these tools is isolated and must seek to understand the complexities of these fine tools by trial and error.

Though a book might never suffice for a master, this one certainly bridges the gap.

Ian McPherson. Ian is a cabinetmaker/furniture maker living in Adelaide and uses a variety of traditional Japanese woodworking tools in his work.



Arts of the Indian Americas. *Leaves from the Sacred Tree.* Jamake Highwater, Harper & Row, New York, 1983, 372 pp, 400 black and white figures, 12 colour plates.

Highwater is an American Indian literary figure who has won awards for his novels, children's books, and reference works on Indian arts and culture. In this book, as in all his work, he is concerned to interpret and communicate the particular reality of being an American Indian, as revealed through Indian arts. His understanding, which he invites the reader to share, is that the art of any culture should be seen as 'a separate reality' which, like 'alternative lifestyles, experimental art forms, [and] relative moral standards', is part of our 'troubled but enlightened' understanding of cultural pluralism. 'Art', he stresses, 'is the most fundamental way of *seeing* . . . . [It] makes a special kind of conception of the world visible to us . . .', and in this book he explores the particular Indian conceptions of their reality, as manifest in their art.

I would be happy to see some or all of the perceptive points made by Highwater in his six page introduction applied by anybody attempting to understand art (or craft) forms. It is no mean achievement to understand and communicate both the cultural basis of art, and the individual creative energies which lie behind any 'work', whether a basket or a monument. The result of Highwater's enlightened perspective is a book remarkable not so much for its range or depth of detailed content (though both are considerable) but for the thought-provoking incisiveness of its interpretations, and for the singular **lack** of the sorts of *clichés* which lurk in so many art books of this nature.

The main part of the book is in three sections: First, Highwater provides the reader with a brief but thorough historical and geographical summary of the arts of the Americas. Next, he introduces us to the range of art forms, iconography, media and technology to be found in Indian arts, once again in a brief (25 pages) but

stimulating way. In the third and major body of the book, 'Leaves of the Sacred Tree', Highwater discusses each type of art form, including basketry, textiles, skinwork, featherwork and beadwork, pottery, carving and sculpture, metalwork, architecture, the minor arts of mosaic, shellwork and cutouts, painting, oral and written literature, and music, dance and ritual. Each of these chapters is a thoroughly researched well-illustrated introduction to its subject, and referencing to an extensive bibliography allows the student of some particular subject to follow it up in more detail elsewhere. (Regrettably, many more specialised books on particular arts or crafts do **not** reflect the same depth of understanding of their subjects as does Highwater in his necessarily more superficial coverage!)

The breadth of coverage of art forms, especially including literature and performance, greatly enhances the stated wish of the author to deal with Indian arts as part of total living creative activity, rather than from the western dualistic standpoint of 'fine art' vs 'craft'. Moreover, each art (or craft) is presented as culturally dynamic. That is, as something subject to change from both within the culture and without. Highwater avoids the common tendency to paint a static picture of the 'traditional' past, and, for each art form, he takes us up to the present day, tackling with equal respect both the revival of older forms and innovation or adaptation.

I cannot recommend this book too highly to anyone wanting a sound introduction to the subject of American Indian arts. It is not an 'easy' book, it is a bit too meaty, and not quite glossy enough, to appeal to the coffee-table set. At times, ease of readability goes under to the author's desire to be fair to the wealth of detail in his subject. However, for those with a genuine interest in this vast and bewilderingly varied field of art, it is a most rewarding and stimulating starting point.

Zoë Wakelin-King. Zoë is the Collections Manager, Americas Anthropology Division at the Australian Museum, Sydney.

Romantic Lace Designs 96 pages, $11.95 **Crochet Mesh** 114 pages with complete diagrams $11.95 Ondorisha Publishers

These two books on crochet are presented by Ondorisha of Japan. Although I could not find it stated anywhere, I would imagine they are the collected patterns of several designers. Both books cover a variety of designs for table cloths, bedspreads, cushion covers, tray cloths and runners and feature the filet type of crochet, with the old favourite pineapple appearing in Romantic Lace Designs along with a couple of collars and some motifs that can be used separately or in applique.

They are primarily aimed at the American market as the crochet terms used are as they appear in all United States books, i.e. a half double crochet (hdc) would be treble (tr) in most Australian publications which are based on the English system for naming stitches.

They are, however, well presented and once the change in basic stitch terminology has been understood they are quite easy to follow, particularly for anyone who prefers to work from charted designs. The diagrams given at the back of the book for constructing the stitches are very clear and will be a great help to anyone who has problems in translating from the North American terms to English.

In Romantic Lace Designs the amount of yarn required is given in grams which will mean some mathematics for those of us who have been conditioned over a number of years to buying a certain number of balls. Crochet Mesh does state the number of balls required for each project, but some allowance should be made for the difference that is inevitable when the brands used are unknown.

The colour plates of the finished pieces are very attractive and I am sure will appeal to all those people who love to crochet. Because the designs are charted there is scope for the more adventurous.

Betty Franks. Betty has an advanced teaching certificate from the Australian Lace Guild.

Books Received

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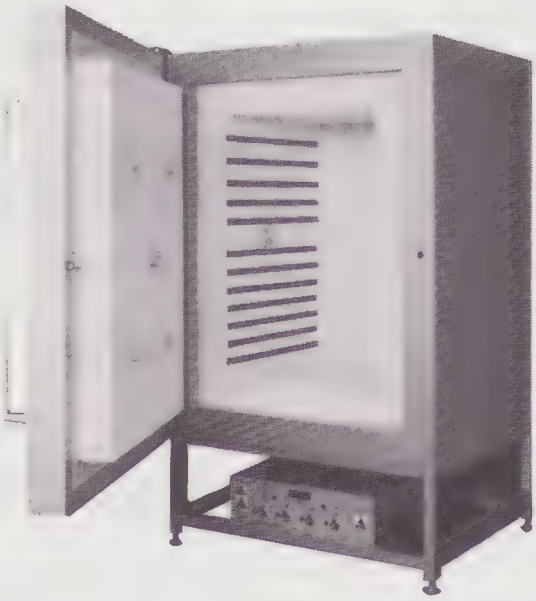

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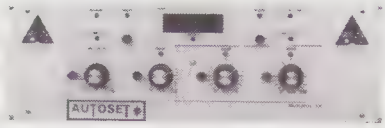

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Critical Eye continued from p. 107

was also a commercial 'tent embassy', a film festival, presented by various tribal women, country music, exhibitions of batik, silkscreens, sculpture, bush cooking, workshops and forums. A wide range of Aboriginal groups, styles and interests, mixing life with art; no-one could come away from the events totally ignorant of A) contemporary Aboriginal politics and B) the complexity of *contemporary* Aboriginal culture, a significant part of which is urban-based. The musical play *Tjinderella* summed it all up, laughter, tears and history from Black women's point of view, immensely valuable and frequently enjoyable. As art, did it succeed? And does it really matter anyway? It succeeded on its own terms as 'an ideal way of initiating interaction between Aboriginal women from different backgrounds and between all women, black and white'.

Pamela Zeplin Waite is an Adelaide art critic and writer.

12 + TASMANIA *Editions Gallery, Fremantle, WA. 3-24 February.*

12 + Tasmania, an exhibition of works by Tasmanian artists became 8 + Tasmania. This was unfortunate, but it in no way weakened the exhibition. Western Australia and Tasmania do have something in common, they are both off the beaten track so to speak, and by being so produce an art style of their own.

Sandra Champion and Jenny Turner *One Off* produce some of the best garments in Australia. Their colours, skill, finish and design are just so top-class.

Richard Clements is producing good hot glass, but I think the few pieces that were shown in the exhibition failed to show what he is capable of making.

Lastly the ceramic work of Les Blakebrough and Penny Smith. Les has taken a new direction and a most interesting one, but they are not all working and I think he needs to find a new clay body that has much more life. It looks very much like morlyns from Victoria to me and this clay once fired above 1120° becomes a very dull grey colour really not suitable for the beautiful decoration applied by Les.

Finally, Penny Smith has on exhibition a most unusual mix-and-match teaset. Designed, finished and very well made, I believe this is the direction of Penny's work and I do enjoy seeing her new slipcast forms.

John Johnson is an artist and manages the *Editions Gallery,* Fremantle, WA.

THE PAINTED POT *Undercroft Gallery, University of WA, Nolan Room 13 February-3 March.*

Twelve West Australian potters and painters have collaborated to produce an exhibition, which to mind, falls short of what could have been a most exciting exhibition.

The strong primitive forms of Toni Donley's are treated by Philippa O'Brien with rather muddy uncontrolled coloured slip and oxides, which produces an overworked flat decoration. This is not so with the Brown/Juniper combination. These works are sensitive and a delight to explore.

Greg Crowe teamed with Nigel Newitt and they produced a series of landscape pots. To my way of thinking, the decoration did not marry in with the forms made.

Large strong shapes from Ian McCrae and the wonderful humour of Leon Perilles worked well together. Leon, I gather, found the clay to his liking.

The last duo was that of Phillip Douglas and Sam Abercromby, their work, for me, was the high point of the exhibition. Both artists handling their materials with knowing confidence, and not afraid to cut, colour and experiment with clay and its wonderful qualities.

My final comment is that I think the Nolan Room was much too small to display 35 pieces of sizeable work. All work needs the space around it, this was very much lacking.

John Johnson is an artist and manages the *Editions Gallery,* Fremantle, WA.

Ask Dr. Ben

When labels or other hazard information say 'Use with good ventilation', what exactly does 'good' ventilation mean?
S.T., Oyster Bay, NSW

Good ventilation really means very little. There are different types of ventilation and it depends on the nature of the product and its related hazards, which type is appropriate.

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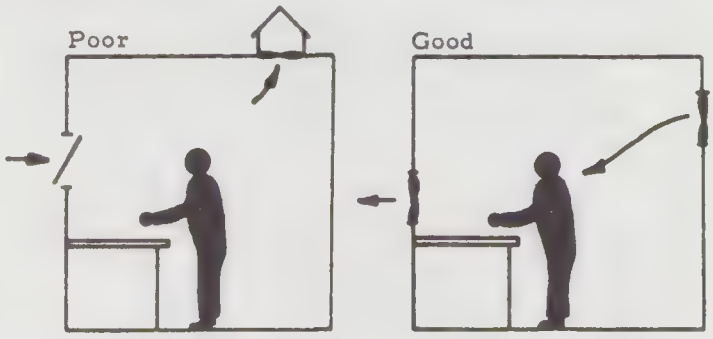
Local Exhaust Ventilation

This is designed to remove toxic dusts, fumes and gases from their work source. It consists of an inlet or hood close to the work; ducting; an air cleaner; and an exhaust fan. The main principle is that the contaminated air must be sucked away from the person's breathing zone, i.e. their nose and mouth. Therefore, the inlet or hood must be located as close as possible to the source of the toxins. It also helps to enclose the work process as much as possible to prevent toxins escaping into the general atmosphere. The exhaust fan must be powerful enough to create sufficient air movement to capture contaminants. To properly achieve this, the air sucked out must be adequately replaced. That is, the incoming air must be able to replace the air removed. If necessary, air could be sucked in with a fan.



Typical distribution conditions. Courtesy *Industrial Ventilation Manual*, 7th edition

Ducts should then carry the contaminated air to the outside. They should be corrosion resistant and be free of leaks. Round ducting allows for better air flow, and the fewer bends in the ducts, the better. Ducts must also be maintained to prevent clogging. This reduces the efficiency of the system and may present a fire hazard.

Before being released outside, the air may be decontaminated by passing through an air-cleaning system. This depends on what is being extracted and how much.

Fans must be sufficiently powerful to capture the contaminated air and pass it through the system to the outside. If flammable materials are being extracted, the fans must be spark-proof or located externally to the flow of contaminated air.

As can be seen, efficient ventilation systems are not cheap. However, for many processes in the crafts, adequate ventilation is really necessary. Even if resources do not allow a proper system to be installed: basic principles, the intelligent installation of an exhaust fan, coupled with the use of appropriate respirators, can provide reasonable protection. In order to properly assess these questions, it is necessary to know what chemicals are being used, and their hazards.

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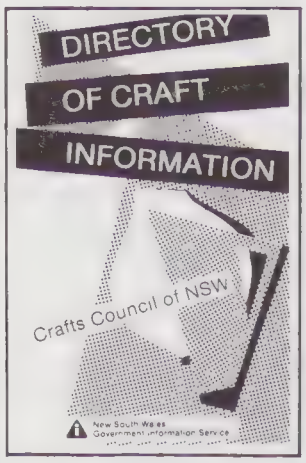

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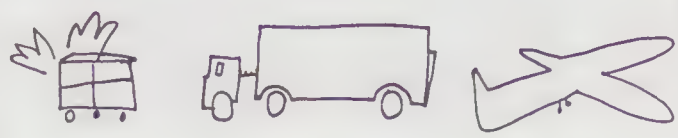

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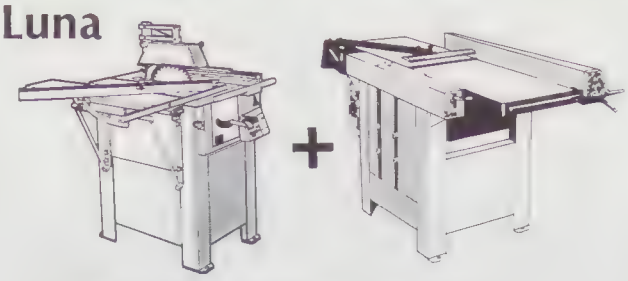

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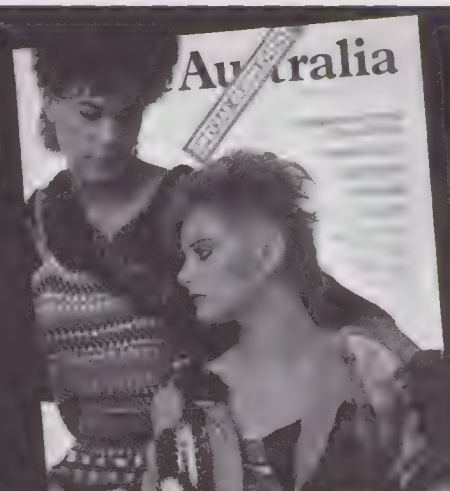

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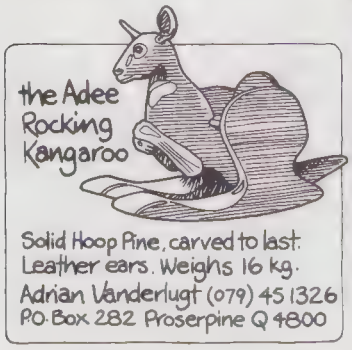

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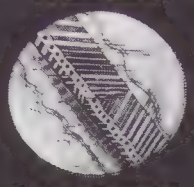

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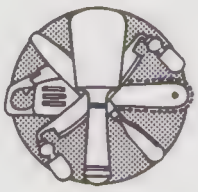

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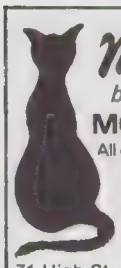

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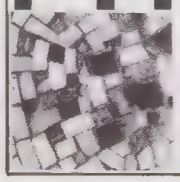

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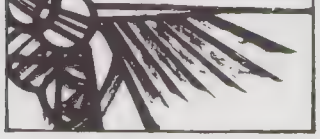

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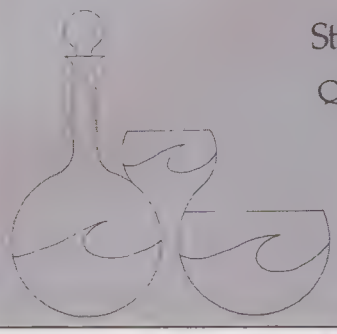

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